United Nations S/PV.3838

Security Council

Fifty-second Year Year

Provisional

3838th Meeting
Wednesday, 3 December 1997, 1.45 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Berrocal Soto	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Eguiguren
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Abdel Aziz
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Konishi
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Wlosowicz
	Portugal	Mrs. Gomes
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Yung Woo Chun
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Letter dated 22 November 1997 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/922)

97-86653 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 1.45 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of December, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Qin Huasun, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of November 1997. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Qin for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Letter dated 22 November 1997 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/922)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1997/922, which contains the text of a letter dated 22 November 1997 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the report of the United Nations Special Commission, established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), on its emergency session.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the report of the emergency session of the Special Commission (UNSCOM) (S/1997/922) aimed at full and expeditious implementation of the relevant resolutions and at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of UNSCOM work to this end.

"The Security Council reiterates its demand that Iraq fulfil all its obligations as set out in all the relevant resolutions, including resolution 1137 (1997), and cooperate fully with UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in implementing their respective mandates. The Council stresses that the effectiveness and speed with which UNSCOM may accomplish its responsibilities is, above all, determined by the degree to which the Government of Iraq cooperates in disclosing the full extent and disposition of its proscribed programmes and in granting UNSCOM unimpeded access to all sites, documents, records and individuals. The Council acknowledges the conclusion of the UNSCOM report that UNSCOM respects the legitimate national security, sovereignty and dignity concerns of Iraq in the context of the need for full application of the mandate given to it by the Council.

"The Security Council welcomes the progress achieved by UNSCOM and the IAEA in various disarmament areas. The Council encourages intensified efforts, in line with the conclusions and recommendations of the emergency session of UNSCOM, in order to implement fully the UNSCOM and IAEA mandates in each of their respective disarmament areas. The Council acknowledges that, as Iraq complies with its obligations under the relevant resolutions, and UNSCOM and the IAEA so report and the Council agrees, UNSCOM and the IAEA would make the transition from investigation to monitoring in their respective areas, expanding the use of the ongoing monitoring system functioning in Iraq.

"The Security Council urges Member States to respond positively to the requests contained in the report of the emergency session of UNSCOM, in particular related to the provision of additional personnel, equipment and information required by UNSCOM and the IAEA for more efficient and effective implementation of their respective mandates.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter and will consider whether additional action may be necessary."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1997/54.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.3839

Security Council
Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3839th Meeting
Thursday, 4 December 1997, 12.25 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Berrocal Soto	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Eguiguren
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Abdel Aziz
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hahm
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997) (S/1997/911 and Add.1)

97-86665 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 12.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997) (S/1997/911 and Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Germany, Italy and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Čalovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Henze (Germany) and Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997), contained in document S/1997/911 and addendum 1. Members of the Council also have before them document S/1997/948, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Costa Rica, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1997/838 and corrigendum 1, which contains the text of a letter dated 3 November 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

The first speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Čalovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Let me first express the satisfaction of my delegation, Mr. President, at seeing you, the representative of Costa Rica, presiding over the Security Council for the month of December. You can count on my delegation's cooperation and support.

The Council is going to adopt an important decision for the maintenance of peace and security in the region of my country, the Republic of Macedonia. It will decide on the further extension of the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), at present the only preventive peace mission of the United Nations. We are pleased that the Council succeeded in concluding successfully its consultations, which will now enable the mission to continue with its important preventive peace activities in our region.

Regrettably, the sad story of the Balkan crisis is not over; it is continuing. It is appropriate that the Council decided to consider the extension of the UNPREDEP mandate in the light of the present situation in the Balkans and of possible developments in the region.

In the letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia addressed to the Secretary-General, the main characteristics of the situation in our region are clearly spelt out. They are also underlined in the Secretary-General's report. It is not necessary, therefore, for me to repeat what was said in my Foreign Minister's letter and in the Secretary-General's report. But it is important to stress that the concerns about the developments in our region are real. I would like to express my Government's satisfaction that these concerns are being considered and taken into account in the decision to extend the mandate of the mission.

In our view, the situation in the Balkans will not improve as much as we would like it to improve in the coming nine months. For this reason, and with the aim of preventing new conflicts, solving the present ones, implementing the Dayton Agreement, developing better good-neighbourly relations among Balkan States and

integrating them into the European structures, first and foremost the European Union, determined efforts by the international community and the United Nations are needed and must continue. Those are the main reasons for my Government's view that a 12-month extension was appropriate.

The Secretary-General's report is very informative on one aspect of the work of UNPREDEP and with regard to the activities of other United Nations organizations, agencies and programmes in my country. We are informed that the United Nations Development Programme will soon open its office in Skopje, to take care of these activities in the future — one burden less for UNPREDEP.

Before concluding, I would like to express my Government's gratitude to the Governments that have made their military and police personnel available to UNPREDEP, and its satisfaction over the excellent cooperation with the Secretary-General, with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Henryk J. Sokalski, who is the head of the UNPREDEP mission, with the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann and, of course, with all the personnel of the mission. At the same time, I would like to stress our conviction that cooperation will continue to be excellent. The standing of UNPREDEP in my country is very high. I am sure that it will remain so in the coming months.

The extension of the UNPREDEP mandate represents an important contribution of the Security Council to the effort to maintain peace and security in the Balkans.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Germany. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Henze (Germany) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me first to say, Mr. President, what a great pleasure and honour it is for me to be participating in a meeting of the Security Council under your presidency. I congratulate you on your assumption of this important post at such an important time.

(*spoke in English*)

Let me also thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to express my Government's views on the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and regarding the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). Germany is a member of the Contact Group and of the Coordinating and Consultative Process (CCP), which prepared the draft resolution before the Council today. But first and foremost it is a country with particularly close ties and friendly relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Therefore, it has taken and continues to take a strong interest in developments in the region and in the future of UNPREDEP.

UNPREDEP operates in a region that is still particularly volatile and unstable. The mission started out as a preventive effort to prevent a spillover from conflicts in the other parts of the former Yugoslavia. Earlier this year, the focus shifted towards the civil unrest in neighbouring Albania and a possible spillover to groups of Albanian origin in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Thanks mainly to the good offices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in the person of former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, and also to the multinational protection force mandated by the Council, the situation in Albania has stabilized considerably. Inter-ethnic relations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia remain of concern, but do not seem to have been directly affected by the crisis in Albania.

Today, it is the situation in the Kosovo region of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, characterized by repression and recent terrorist acts, which is deteriorating and giving rise to fears of destabilization also in the area of operation of UNPREDEP. Germany strongly encourages the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to enter into a peaceful dialogue with the Kosovo Albanians on a solution to the crisis.

With preventive missions — and UNPREDEP is a model in this regard — it is always particularly difficult to gauge the degree of success. It is similarly difficult to decide when a preventive mission has satisfactorily completed its task and is no longer necessary. This is due to the fact that the lack of negative events, that is, the forestalling of destabilization, is the goal to be achieved, and there can never be absolute certainty that the preservation of stability is really due to the presence of the mission, or perhaps would have been possible even

without it. Nevertheless, there seems to be general agreement that UNPREDEP has been a success story that the United Nations and the Council can claim full credit for, and we entirely share this assessment. Germany also believes that we should take no chances by ending the international military presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia before a sufficient degree of stability is achieved throughout the surrounding region.

In view of this situation, Germany supports the draft resolution before the Council today, which foresees an extension of UNPREDEP's mandate for nine months. We are also looking forward to the recommendations requested from the Secretary-General for the most appropriate type of international presence after the end of this mandate period.

Let me end by expressing my appreciation to the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, to the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, and to all members of UNPREDEP for their successful work in preserving peace and stability in the region.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Germany for his kind words addressed to me in Spanish.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy): Mr. President, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. There can be no doubt that under your wise guidance, this month's work will be successful. At the same time, I wish to compliment your predecessor, Ambassador Qin Huasun of China, for his exemplary leadership of the Council in November.

Italy fully shares the Secretary-General's assessment, contained in his report of 20 November 1997 [S/1997/911], that over the past five years, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has successfully helped prevent the spillover of conflicts from elsewhere in the region into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. UNPREDEP sets an important precedent in the preventive deployment of United Nations forces, and has been a success story whose results should not be wasted or jeopardized.

The United Nations mission has promoted dialogue among the various political forces and ethnic communities, provided humanitarian assistance to the local population, and enhanced social integration and institution building. The operation is making a decisive contribution to the stabilization of the political situation in the country, sheltering it from the dangers of increased tensions that could stem from continued instability in the region.

However, we also agree with the Secretary-General that peace and stability in the country continue to depend largely on developments in other parts of the region. While the Secretary-General's report underlines an improvement in the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we cannot ignore the elements of precariousness that continue to exist.

Italy has also noted the request of the Foreign Minister of the host Government, Mr. Blagoj Handziski, for a 12-month extension of the UNPREDEP mandate, and was ready to support it. In his letter to the Secretary-General [S/1997/838, annex], Mr. Handziski expressed his Government's concern over the continued sources of destabilization in the region, and in particular the situation in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Italy agrees with these assessments. While the situation in Albania has greatly improved in the past few months, thanks also to the prompt response of the international community, and especially the Security Council, which rapidly authorized the Italian-led multinational protection force in the country, there can be no doubt that tensions persist in the region.

In our view, these circumstances would make any withdrawal of UNPREDEP forces at this stage premature, and risk sending the wrong signal. We should not forget that the original purpose of deploying a United Nations mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was to prevent it from being destabilized by conflicts elsewhere in the area. Therefore, the situation in the country should not only be considered by itself, but also in the broader context of regional developments.

This is why we welcome the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, and have sponsored today's draft resolution to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP, in its present configuration, for nine months. In this respect, as part of the Coordinating and Consultative Process and of the Contact Group, my delegation would like to praise the spirit of flexibility and

compromise that has prevailed, thus allowing this extension.

In fact, this nine-month period appears to be the minimum requirement for ensuring that, once the UNPREDEP operation terminates, proper successor arrangements will be put in place to guarantee the international community's ongoing commitment to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Italy stands by this commitment.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Italy for his kind words addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): As just underlined by the two previous speakers, the representatives of Germany and Italy, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has performed its mandate with remarkable effectiveness and success, preventing the spillover of conflict into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from other parts of that volatile region. Now that its tasks have been largely fulfilled, we fully support the Secretary-General's intention to elaborate the next strategy for UNPREDEP and to design an appropriate and effective successor arrangement. Above all, those efforts will seek to maintain the stability afforded by UNPREDEP.

Continued uncertainty, particularly instability in Kosovo, as well as elsewhere in the region, makes it necessary to proceed with caution in the replacement of UNPREDEP. We must keep in mind that UNPREDEP also plays an important role internally due to the fact that it has the confidence and support of all ethnic and political forces. This valuable contribution should not be jeopardized.

According to the Secretary-General, there is a need to observe the effectiveness of UNPREDEP following the reduction of the military component pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997). Furthermore, the severe winter conditions of the region make it difficult to downsize further the mission before the spring of 1998.

Taking all these considerations into account, Portugal supports the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP, as recommended by the Secretary-General, but for a longer final period of almost nine months. This will allow the withdrawal of UNPREDEP to be adequately prepared for, and will give the Secretary-General time to look at all the possible options for replacing that Force. We look forward to receiving his recommendations on what type of international presence would be most appropriate after the expiration of UNPREDEP's mandate.

As a sponsor of the resolution before the Council, Portugal will of course be voting in favour of it. As a contributor of personnel to UNPREDEP, Portugal would like to pay tribute to all the military and civilian personnel of UNPREDEP, and thank them for their commitment and hard work.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): We welcome the fact that the general situation in the former Yugoslavia is stable and continuing to improve. In our view, the continued maintenance of stability in the former Yugoslavia is conducive to the development of friendly and good-neighbourly relations and economic reconstruction by the countries of the region.

We are pleased to note that Macedonia and the other countries of the region are working towards the improvement of their mutual relations. We hope that these countries will continue to take effective measures, resolve their remaining differences, and soon begin living together in harmony, as is consistent with the fundamental interests of their peoples.

The task of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) is to prevent the spillover of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia into Macedonia. We have noted the recommendations by the Secretary-General and the interested parties on the question of extending UNPREDEP's mandate. We feel that its extension should be considered in conjunction with the current situation of stability in the region. We wish to reiterate that the political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Macedonia should be respected.

Taking into account the request by Macedonia, the country concerned, for an extension of UNPREDEP's mandate, and on the basis of our consistent position, the

Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Owada (Japan): The Government of Japan attaches great importance to the stability of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as a key to the maintenance of peace and security in the entire Balkan region. In this context, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has been successfully carrying out its mission for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in preventing the spillover of conflicts elsewhere in the region into that country. UNPREDEP represents one of the most successful examples of the preventive deployment of peacekeeping forces.

My delegation shares the view of the Secretary-General that a situation of peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is at this stage generally being maintained, although we should naturally be sensitive to the factors that might have a negative impact on this stability, such as the still fragile situation in the neighbouring countries and the inter-ethnic relations within the country itself.

In view of the overall situation in and around the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, my delegation agrees with the suggestion of the Secretary-General, contained in his latest report, that consideration of exit strategies, including the modalities of the termination of the operation of UNPREDEP, be commenced.

At the same time, my delegation takes note of the observation of the Secretary-General that any decision to further downsize the military component could hardly be implemented before the spring of 1998, owing to the severe winter conditions in the region. Furthermore, ample consideration should be given to the exit strategies and the type of future international presence that would be most appropriate in the wake of the exit of UNPREDEP from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Taking all these factors into account, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution. This draft resolution, which has been drafted in principle in accordance with the basic lines of the recommendations of the Secretary-General, seeks to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP for the final period until 31 August 1998.

In the meantime, the exit strategies and the most appropriate type of international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the future should be studied by this Council during the forthcoming period, in the light of the recommendations of the Secretary-General.

I should like to close my remarks by expressing the deep appreciation of my Government to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, and to the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, as well as to all the men and women working with UNPREDEP for their efforts and dedication in carrying out their important mission.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): Naturally I would like to express my complete confidence in what we are sure will be the successful results of your presidency, Sir, and our great appreciation of the way in which the Council's work last month was conducted under the presidency of the Permanent Representative of China.

The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) is a success. Its work has helped keep the crises in the Balkan region from spilling over into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The success of this mission demonstrates the importance of a United Nations operation in preventing the outbreak of some conflicts. The example of UNPREDEP can thus prove useful in avoiding the spread of crises in other parts of the world, especially in Africa, where the need for preventive deployment by the United Nations is in many cases every bit as justified as in the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

France shares the opinion expressed by the Secretary-General in his last report on the need to maintain UNPREDEP's presence. Admittedly, the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the region is more encouraging in some areas today. However, there are still causes for concern, particularly in the light of risks linked to the Kosovo situation.

When the time comes, the modalities of the international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will probably have to be adapted to take account of developments within both the country and the region. However, this should not be rushed into. The time-frame in the draft resolution seems, under the circumstances, appropriate.

For all these reasons, France will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): Sweden has been a troop contributor since the very start of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). As such, we are proud to be a part of this very successful first United Nations preventive deployment mission. UNPREDEP will no doubt serve as an example for future preventive action by the Security Council.

The situation on the ground having improved, it is now possible to start considering alternative forms of international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The withdrawal of the military component of UNPREDEP after the expiry of the mission's mandate in August next year must not mean the end of international support for the sovereignty and stability of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. My Government looks forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General in June next year on how further to assist that country.

In more general terms, the success of UNPREDEP to date highlights the importance of the concept of preventive action. The lesson we have learned is that the international community, and in particular this Council, must act early and choose the adequate measures from the wide range of instruments available for conflict resolution. In the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, preventive deployment of United Nations troops was clearly the right choice at the right time.

Another lesson could be that for a mission of this kind to be considered a success and an example for the future, it should not be prolonged indefinitely and without change. As circumstances on the ground evolve, the international community must be prepared to adjust the instruments of conflict resolution accordingly. This is what we want the United Nations to do in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia next year.

Sweden will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Matuszewski (Poland): The Polish delegation welcomes the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) for a final period of nine months, until the end of August 1998. UNPREDEP has played an important and highly effective role in the preservation of peace and security in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the region. On many occasions members of the Security Council have referred to this mission as one of the success stories of the United Nations, and we fully share this view. The deployment of UNPREDEP and the activities of this peacekeeping force have clearly demonstrated the justification for and the merit of the concept of preventive diplomacy. The further presence of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force will undoubtedly have a stabilizing and confidence-building effect in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the entire region.

The Polish delegation agrees with the assessment of the Secretary-General, contained in his report of 20 November 1997, that peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to depend largely on developments in other parts of the region. Indeed, an uncertain and fragile regional situation prevails. We are concerned about the increased violence in Kosovo, incidents on the border of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with Albania, slow progress in implementing the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a lack of progress in the demarcation of the border between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In the internal sphere, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has made commendable strides towards implementing democratic reforms, yet persistent socio-economic difficulties and inter-ethnic tensions are still fraught with destabilizing potential. These external and internal factors, as well as the request of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the recommendations of the Secretary-General, were taken into account by the Polish delegation in deciding to support the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP at its current strength. We look forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General on the post-UNPREDEP international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Finally, let me pay tribute to the military and civilian personnel of UNPREDEP for the dedication they have shown in performing their tasks and duties. I also wish to express my country's appreciation and support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, and to the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, for the commendable manner in which they have conducted their activities in a difficult and sensitive environment.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): At the outset, let me state that my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution extending the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) for a final period of nine months, up to 31 August 1998. Kenya is

proud to have been associated with this important mission since its inception in 1995, contributing some of our best military officers as observers. We will continue to support this and other peacekeeping operations around the world.

The presence of UNPREDEP in the region has brought about an improvement of the relations between Macedonia and some of its neighbours. Since their deployment five years ago, UNPREDEP personnel have worked hard to prevent the spillover into Macedonia of conflicts occurring elsewhere in the region. In the process, UNPREDEP has promoted conflict resolution among the various political forces and ethnic communities.

UNPREDEP has also endeavoured to reach out to the vulnerable segments of society through institution-building and experience- sharing. As stated in the Secretary-General's report, these initiatives have played an important role in building confidence between the people of the host country and the mission. Other United Nations missions, present and future, may wish to benefit from this approach, which has proved to be effective in creating a good working environment between the mission and the people of the host country. In this regard, we wish to thank the men and women of UNPREDEP for the commitment and dedication that they have demonstrated in the performance of their duties.

My delegation welcomes the signing of the joint statement by the leaders of 11 political parties on three major issues, among them the country's relations with its neighbours. This is a positive development and is quite encouraging. However, much more remains to be done in order to achieve long-term peace and stability in Macedonia. Furthermore, peace and stability in Macedonia will continue to depend largely on developments in other parts of the region. The slow progress in the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has underscored the need for a long-term commitment by the international community in that country, is a case in point.

We therefore share the views that developments in the neighbouring countries and the inherent threats they pose to Macedonia are unpredictable. For example, the fact that there are 3,500 Bosnian refugees in Macedonia while only 252 refugees have gone back to Bosnia and Herzegovina could be an indication of the level of insecurity in that country for returning refugees.

We support the Secretary-General in his observation that there is continued need for a long-term commitment by the international community in Macedonia. In this regard, we welcome the macroeconomic programmes being put in place by, among others, the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations Development Programme. These programmes are critical for Macedonia's long-term development.

In supporting the final, nine-month extension of UNPREDEP's mandate, we have taken into account the fact that the host country itself has requested such an extension. In addition, the active support and cooperation of the host Government and ethnic forces in that country is commendable. This suggests that the parties in Macedonia recognize the important role that UNPREDEP continues to play in preventing the spillover into Macedonia of conflicts occurring elsewhere in that region.

Mr. Abdel Aziz (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The delegation of Egypt supports the draft resolution before us today extending the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) for a final period of nine months, until 31 August 1998. In appreciation of that role, Egypt has supported, throughout its membership in the Council for the last two years, the resolutions under which the mandate of UNPREDEP was extended in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

With resolution 795 (1992) of 11 December 1992, the Security Council laid the basis for the first preventive peacekeeping operation under United Nations auspices by authorizing the deployment of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This contributed effectively to preventing the spread to that country of the military conflict in the region at that time.

The change of the name of that Force from UNPROFOR to UNPREDEP, in Security Council resolution 983 (1995) of 31 March 1995, reflected more clearly the successful preventive role that has been played by the United Nations peacekeeping force in that Republic. The decision to be taken by the Council today to extend the mandate of the Force for a final period five years after its initial deployment takes into account the positive developments in the region. At the same time it also highlights to a large extent time limits and other practical constraints on the United Nations role in shouldering of the full responsibility for such operations.

Undoubtedly, the experience of UNPREDEP deserves close study and analysis by the Security Council and by the Member States of the United Nations, as well as by the Secretariat, so that the successful elements of the operation can be employed in the future to effectively support the United Nations role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In this context, it is probable that the most important of these elements, which must be highlighted, is the consent, the welcome and, indeed, the initiative made by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the deployment of the Force on its territory. This was reflected later in the Government's full cooperation with the Force, which had the greatest impact in facilitating the successful discharge of its mandate.

It is our hope that the desired study by the Security Council of this preventive experience will lead to concrete conclusions that will help support the Council's credibility as regards its resolutions for the deployment of peacekeeping forces for preventive purposes in various regions and continents of the world.

As for the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we deem it important for the international community to build on the stability and the more secure environment in the Republic provided by the presence of UNPREDEP. We look forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General concerning the alternatives for the future international presence there.

Finally, I would like to express our appreciation to Mr. Henryk Sokalski, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his efforts and to the Force Commander and the personnel of the Force for their contributions and their successful discharge of their duties.

Mr. Hahm (Republic of Korea): During the course of the past five years, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the first of its kind in United Nations history, has helped restore peace and stability to a region that had once been mired in inter-ethnic turmoil and the tragedy of war.

In particular, UNPREDEP has done much to effectively contain the spillover of conflicts from neighbouring countries, to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and to improve the overall human rights situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Korean delegation very much appreciates and pays high tribute to all the UNPREDEP personnel, whose diligent efforts have made this unique preventive operation a success story thus far and provided the Macedonian people with a renewed sense of optimism for the future of their country.

While the headway made in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is certainly encouraging and surrounding circumstances have improved significantly, we share the concern of the international community at the lingering uncertainty and volatility in the adjacent regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo, among others. The concurrent lack of progress in demarcating borders with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the domestic inter-ethnic strain within Macedonia also warrant further attention.

Bearing in mind the foregoing factors, as well as the position of the host country, the Republic of Korea supports the extension of the UNPREDEP mandate and particularly welcomes the political compromise reached among members of the Security Council to extend the mandate for a final period of nine months. My delegation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution to this effect.

Finally, given the need for a continued commitment on the part of the international community to peace and stability in the region beyond this nine-month period, we strongly hope that the Secretary-General, in consultation with relevant bodies and concerned countries, including the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia itself, can in due course come up with an appropriate and viable successor arrangement to UNPREDEP.

Mr. Eguiguren (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Since its establishment more than five years ago, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has played an important role in stabilizing the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Balkan region as a whole. We value enormously the contribution that has been made by the Preventive Deployment Force in the face of changing circumstances.

However, in spite of the apparent stability in the region following the end of the recent crisis in Albania, adverse factors still persist, at varying levels of intensity. These make it inadvisable right now to bring to a close this successful first experience of the United Nations in preventive deployment.

In this context, we should consider that, in spite of the important progress made recently in relations between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, no definitive agreement has yet been reached on the delicate problem of the demarcation of their common border. Furthermore, the persistence of inter-ethnic tension and the possibility that potential difficulties in the region will have repercussions in the territory of Macedonia strengthen our conviction that the level of stability necessary for considering ending UNPREDEP has yet to be reached. Therefore, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution by which the Security Council would extend the mandate of UNPREDEP for a period of nine months and would request the Secretary-General to submit recommendations on the type of international presence that could subsequently be established in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America): The United States supports this draft resolution to extend the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We congratulate the mission, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, the mission Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Macedonia. They have ensured that UNPREDEP plays an important and highly effective role in promoting stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the region. The mission has been an unequivocal success.

We take satisfaction in the preservation of peace and stability in the region and in the gradually improving situation there. The stabilization in Albania, including through the efforts of Italy and the rest of the international community, is especially welcome, although the situation remains fragile.

All these developments have permitted the recent reduction of UNPREDEP's military force by 300 troops. This reduction demonstrates our intention to move towards an exit strategy for the mission in a measured and responsible way which preserves and builds upon the achievements of the international effort.

We remain deeply concerned, however, that significant risks remain in the region and on the borders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. There is ample evidence of increasing violence and tension in Kosovo, continuing incidents along the Albanian border and persistent problems related to border demarcation issues. These factors underline that now clearly is not the time to remove, or further reduce, the military component of this highly successful mission.

We fully support the Secretary-General's intention to consult with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with interested organizations and with interested Member States in working toward options for an appropriate successor security mechanism which will ensure that the enormous gains made by UNPREDEP are not jeopardized when the Mission's mandate ends.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Costa Rica.

My delegation is pleased to welcome the successful work of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), whose presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has prevented the spread of the crisis affecting neighbouring States. My delegation considers of particular importance the work of the Force in its efforts to bring together the different communities in order to promote democratic dialogue between the different political forces and ethnic communities. Likewise, we appreciate its efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to the population and help initiate development projects, which have contributed significantly to increasing social integration.

Nevertheless, like other delegations, Costa Rica is concerned about the persistence of focal points and processes of regional destabilization. We therefore believe that the presence of this Force remains necessary, and we share the judgement of the Secretary-General that when the mandate of these operations ends there must be a guarantee of proper successor arrangements, and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia must be reassured of the international community's intention to promote peace and stability in that country.

In addition, my delegation cannot fail to highlight the importance of the activities being carried out in the country and throughout the region by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Children's Fund. These activities are essential to ensuring peace.

Costa Rica trusts that the United Nations Development Programme will soon be able to open an

office in the Republic of Macedonia, and hopes that it will serve as an active centre to stimulate and promote international cooperation and economic and social development there.

My delegation supports the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP, for the last time, to 31 August 1998.

I resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1997/948.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Chile, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (interpretation from Spanish): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1142 (1997).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Developments in the situation in Macedonia and the region, particularly after the successful handling of the acute political crisis and the stabilization of the situation in Albania, confirm how relevant and timely is restructuring of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), with the withdrawal of a military component from the operation. Clearly, the mandate established in 1991 and already successfully implemented — the mandate given to the Blue Helmets and their continued presence in Macedonia — cannot be an effective instrument for neutralizing today's risks to stability within and around the country. Therefore, on the question of the United Nations presence in Macedonia, the centre of gravity should now shift to the civilian area, bringing into play non-military international structures, primarily the civilian police.

The Russian Federation consistently supports this approach, noting the importance of strengthening the positive experience of UNPREDEP, as the United Nations first preventive peacemaking operation. However, while taking into account the position of interested parties, primarily that of Macedonia, and the recommendation by the Secretary-General, the Russian Federation has demonstrated maximum constructive flexibility and has agreed to the final — there is no doubt about that — extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP, until 31 August 1998, with the withdrawal of the military component immediately thereafter. There will be no artificial delays.

The resolution we have just adopted is relevant and clear; the wording permits no different interpretations. Like all decisions of the Security Council, it must be implemented unconditionally and clearly. A guarantee to that effect is the resolution's request to the Secretary-General to submit by 1 June 1998 a report containing concrete information on the modalities of the termination of UNPREDEP, including practical steps for the complete withdrawal of the military component immediately after 31 August 1998, since such a withdrawal will take a couple of days, as is confirmed by our recent experience in the withdrawal of United Nations military contingents from Haiti.

We also expect that the Secretary-General will make recommendations in his report on the optimum format for a further international presence in Macedonia.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.3839*

Security Council
Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3839th Meeting
Thursday, 4 December 1997, 12.25 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Berrocal Soto	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Eguiguren
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Abdel Aziz
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hahm
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997) (S/1997/911 and Add.1)

* Reissued for technical reasons.

97-86695 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 12.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997) (S/1997/911 and Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Germany, Italy and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Čalovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Henze (Germany) and Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997), contained in document S/1997/911 and addendum 1. Members of the Council also have before them document S/1997/948, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Costa Rica, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1997/838 and corrigendum 1, which contains the text of a letter dated 3 November 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

The first speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Čalovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Let me first express the satisfaction of my delegation, Mr. President, at seeing you, the representative of Costa Rica, presiding over the Security Council for the month of December. You can count on my delegation's cooperation and support.

The Council is going to adopt an important decision for the maintenance of peace and security in the region of my country, the Republic of Macedonia. It will decide on the further extension of the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), at present the only preventive peace mission of the United Nations. We are pleased that the Council succeeded in concluding successfully its consultations, which will now enable the mission to continue with its important preventive peace activities in our region.

Regrettably, the sad story of the Balkan crisis is not over; it is continuing. It is appropriate that the Council decided to consider the extension of the UNPREDEP mandate in the light of the present situation in the Balkans and of possible developments in the region.

In the letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia addressed to the Secretary-General, the main characteristics of the situation in our region are clearly spelt out. They are also underlined in the Secretary-General's report. It is not necessary, therefore, for me to repeat what was said in my Foreign Minister's letter and in the Secretary-General's report. But it is important to stress that the concerns about the developments in our region are real. I would like to express my Government's satisfaction that these concerns are being considered and taken into account in the decision to extend the mandate of the mission.

In our view, the situation in the Balkans will not improve as much as we would like it to improve in the coming nine months. For this reason, and with the aim of preventing new conflicts, solving the present ones, implementing the Dayton Agreement, developing better good-neighbourly relations among Balkan States and

integrating them into the European structures, first and foremost the European Union, determined efforts by the international community and the United Nations are needed and must continue. Those are the main reasons for my Government's view that a 12-month extension was appropriate.

The Secretary-General's report is very informative on one aspect of the work of UNPREDEP and with regard to the activities of other United Nations organizations, agencies and programmes in my country. We are informed that the United Nations Development Programme will soon open its office in Skopje, to take care of these activities in the future — one burden less for UNPREDEP.

Before concluding, I would like to express my Government's gratitude to the Governments that have made their military and police personnel available to UNPREDEP, and its satisfaction over the excellent cooperation with the Secretary-General, with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Henryk J. Sokalski, who is the head of the UNPREDEP mission, with the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann and, of course, with all the personnel of the mission. At the same time, I would like to stress our conviction that cooperation will continue to be excellent. The standing of UNPREDEP in my country is very high. I am sure that it will remain so in the coming months.

The extension of the UNPREDEP mandate represents an important contribution of the Security Council to the effort to maintain peace and security in the Balkans.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Germany. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Henze (Germany) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me first to say, Mr. President, what a great pleasure and honour it is for me to be participating in a meeting of the Security Council under your presidency. I congratulate you on your assumption of this important post at such an important time.

(*spoke in English*)

Let me also thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to express my Government's views on the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and regarding the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). Germany is a member of the Contact Group and of the Coordinating and Consultative Process (CCP), which prepared the draft resolution before the Council today. But first and foremost it is a country with particularly close ties and friendly relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Therefore, it has taken and continues to take a strong interest in developments in the region and in the future of UNPREDEP.

UNPREDEP operates in a region that is still particularly volatile and unstable. The mission started out as a preventive effort to prevent a spillover from conflicts in the other parts of the former Yugoslavia. Earlier this year, the focus shifted towards the civil unrest in neighbouring Albania and a possible spillover to groups of Albanian origin in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Thanks mainly to the good offices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in the person of former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, and also to the multinational protection force mandated by the Council, the situation in Albania has stabilized considerably. Inter-ethnic relations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia remain of concern, but do not seem to have been directly affected by the crisis in Albania.

Today, it is the situation in the Kosovo region of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, characterized by repression and recent terrorist acts, which is deteriorating and giving rise to fears of destabilization also in the area of operation of UNPREDEP. Germany strongly encourages the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to enter into a peaceful dialogue with the Kosovo Albanians on a solution to the crisis.

With preventive missions — and UNPREDEP is a model in this regard — it is always particularly difficult to gauge the degree of success. It is similarly difficult to decide when a preventive mission has satisfactorily completed its task and is no longer necessary. This is due to the fact that the lack of negative events, that is, the forestalling of destabilization, is the goal to be achieved, and there can never be absolute certainty that the preservation of stability is really due to the presence of the mission, or perhaps would have been possible even

without it. Nevertheless, there seems to be general agreement that UNPREDEP has been a success story that the United Nations and the Council can claim full credit for, and we entirely share this assessment. Germany also believes that we should take no chances by ending the international military presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia before a sufficient degree of stability is achieved throughout the surrounding region.

In view of this situation, Germany supports the draft resolution before the Council today, which foresees an extension of UNPREDEP's mandate for nine months. We are also looking forward to the recommendations requested from the Secretary-General for the most appropriate type of international presence after the end of this mandate period.

Let me end by expressing my appreciation to the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, to the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, and to all members of UNPREDEP for their successful work in preserving peace and stability in the region.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Germany for his kind words addressed to me in Spanish.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy): Mr. President, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. There can be no doubt that under your wise guidance, this month's work will be successful. At the same time, I wish to compliment your predecessor, Ambassador Qin Huasun of China, for his exemplary leadership of the Council in November.

Italy fully shares the Secretary-General's assessment, contained in his report of 20 November 1997 [S/1997/911], that over the past five years, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has successfully helped prevent the spillover of conflicts from elsewhere in the region into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. UNPREDEP sets an important precedent in the preventive deployment of United Nations forces, and has been a success story whose results should not be wasted or jeopardized.

The United Nations mission has promoted dialogue among the various political forces and ethnic communities, provided humanitarian assistance to the local population, and enhanced social integration and institution building. The operation is making a decisive contribution to the stabilization of the political situation in the country, sheltering it from the dangers of increased tensions that could stem from continued instability in the region.

However, we also agree with the Secretary-General that peace and stability in the country continue to depend largely on developments in other parts of the region. While the Secretary-General's report underlines an improvement in the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we cannot ignore the elements of precariousness that continue to exist.

Italy has also noted the request of the Foreign Minister of the host Government, Mr. Blagoj Handziski, for a 12-month extension of the UNPREDEP mandate, and was ready to support it. In his letter to the Secretary-General [S/1997/838, annex], Mr. Handziski expressed his Government's concern over the continued sources of destabilization in the region, and in particular the situation in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Italy agrees with these assessments. While the situation in Albania has greatly improved in the past few months, thanks also to the prompt response of the international community, and especially the Security Council, which rapidly authorized the Italian-led multinational protection force in the country, there can be no doubt that tensions persist in the region.

In our view, these circumstances would make any withdrawal of UNPREDEP forces at this stage premature, and risk sending the wrong signal. We should not forget that the original purpose of deploying a United Nations mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was to prevent it from being destabilized by conflicts elsewhere in the area. Therefore, the situation in the country should not only be considered by itself, but also in the broader context of regional developments.

This is why we welcome the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, and have sponsored today's draft resolution to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP, in its present configuration, for nine months. In this respect, as part of the Coordinating and Consultative Process and of the Contact Group, my delegation would like to praise the spirit of flexibility and

compromise that has prevailed, thus allowing this extension.

In fact, this nine-month period appears to be the minimum requirement for ensuring that, once the UNPREDEP operation terminates, proper successor arrangements will be put in place to guarantee the international community's ongoing commitment to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Italy stands by this commitment.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Italy for his kind words addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): As just underlined by the two previous speakers, the representatives of Germany and Italy, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has performed its mandate with remarkable effectiveness and success, preventing the spillover of conflict into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from other parts of that volatile region. Now that its tasks have been largely fulfilled, we fully support the Secretary-General's intention to elaborate the next strategy for UNPREDEP and to design an appropriate and effective successor arrangement. Above all, those efforts will seek to maintain the stability afforded by UNPREDEP.

Continued uncertainty, particularly instability in Kosovo, as well as elsewhere in the region, makes it necessary to proceed with caution in the replacement of UNPREDEP. We must keep in mind that UNPREDEP also plays an important role internally due to the fact that it has the confidence and support of all ethnic and political forces. This valuable contribution should not be jeopardized.

According to the Secretary-General, there is a need to observe the effectiveness of UNPREDEP following the reduction of the military component pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997). Furthermore, the severe winter conditions of the region make it difficult to downsize further the mission before the spring of 1998.

Taking all these considerations into account, Portugal supports the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP, as recommended by the Secretary-General, but for a longer final period of almost nine months. This will allow the withdrawal of UNPREDEP to be adequately prepared for, and will give the Secretary-General time to look at all the possible options for replacing that Force. We look forward to receiving his recommendations on what type of international presence would be most appropriate after the expiration of UNPREDEP's mandate.

As a sponsor of the resolution before the Council, Portugal will of course be voting in favour of it. As a contributor of personnel to UNPREDEP, Portugal would like to pay tribute to all the military and civilian personnel of UNPREDEP, and thank them for their commitment and hard work.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): We welcome the fact that the general situation in the former Yugoslavia is stable and continuing to improve. In our view, the continued maintenance of stability in the former Yugoslavia is conducive to the development of friendly and good-neighbourly relations and economic reconstruction by the countries of the region.

We are pleased to note that Macedonia and the other countries of the region are working towards the improvement of their mutual relations. We hope that these countries will continue to take effective measures, resolve their remaining differences, and soon begin living together in harmony, as is consistent with the fundamental interests of their peoples.

The task of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) is to prevent the spillover of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia into Macedonia. We have noted the recommendations by the Secretary-General and the interested parties on the question of extending UNPREDEP's mandate. We feel that its extension should be considered in conjunction with the current situation of stability in the region. We wish to reiterate that the political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Macedonia should be respected.

Taking into account the request by Macedonia, the country concerned, for an extension of UNPREDEP's mandate, and on the basis of our consistent position, the

Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Owada (Japan): The Government of Japan attaches great importance to the stability of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as a key to the maintenance of peace and security in the entire Balkan region. In this context, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has been successfully carrying out its mission for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in preventing the spillover of conflicts elsewhere in the region into that country. UNPREDEP represents one of the most successful examples of the preventive deployment of peacekeeping forces.

My delegation shares the view of the Secretary-General that a situation of peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is at this stage generally being maintained, although we should naturally be sensitive to the factors that might have a negative impact on this stability, such as the still fragile situation in the neighbouring countries and the inter-ethnic relations within the country itself.

In view of the overall situation in and around the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, my delegation agrees with the suggestion of the Secretary-General, contained in his latest report, that consideration of exit strategies, including the modalities of the termination of the operation of UNPREDEP, be commenced.

At the same time, my delegation takes note of the observation of the Secretary-General that any decision to further downsize the military component could hardly be implemented before the spring of 1998, owing to the severe winter conditions in the region. Furthermore, ample consideration should be given to the exit strategies and the type of future international presence that would be most appropriate in the wake of the exit of UNPREDEP from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Taking all these factors into account, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution. This draft resolution, which has been drafted in principle in accordance with the basic lines of the recommendations of the Secretary-General, seeks to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP for the final period until 31 August 1998.

In the meantime, the exit strategies and the most appropriate type of international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the future should be studied by this Council during the forthcoming period, in the light of the recommendations of the Secretary-General.

I should like to close my remarks by expressing the deep appreciation of my Government to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, and to the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, as well as to all the men and women working with UNPREDEP for their efforts and dedication in carrying out their important mission.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): Naturally I would like to express my complete confidence in what we are sure will be the successful results of your presidency, Sir, and our great appreciation of the way in which the Council's work last month was conducted under the presidency of the Permanent Representative of China.

The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) is a success. Its work has helped keep the crises in the Balkan region from spilling over into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The success of this mission demonstrates the importance of a United Nations operation in preventing the outbreak of some conflicts. The example of UNPREDEP can thus prove useful in avoiding the spread of crises in other parts of the world, especially in Africa, where the need for preventive deployment by the United Nations is in many cases every bit as justified as in the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

France shares the opinion expressed by the Secretary-General in his last report on the need to maintain UNPREDEP's presence. Admittedly, the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the region is more encouraging in some areas today. However, there are still causes for concern, particularly in the light of risks linked to the Kosovo situation.

When the time comes, the modalities of the international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will probably have to be adapted to take account of developments within both the country and the region. However, this should not be rushed into. The time-frame in the draft resolution seems, under the circumstances, appropriate.

For all these reasons, France will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): Sweden has been a troop contributor since the very start of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). As such, we are proud to be a part of this very successful first United Nations preventive deployment mission. UNPREDEP will no doubt serve as an example for future preventive action by the Security Council.

The situation on the ground having improved, it is now possible to start considering alternative forms of international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The withdrawal of the military component of UNPREDEP after the expiry of the mission's mandate in August next year must not mean the end of international support for the sovereignty and stability of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. My Government looks forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General in June next year on how further to assist that country.

In more general terms, the success of UNPREDEP to date highlights the importance of the concept of preventive action. The lesson we have learned is that the international community, and in particular this Council, must act early and choose the adequate measures from the wide range of instruments available for conflict resolution. In the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, preventive deployment of United Nations troops was clearly the right choice at the right time.

Another lesson could be that for a mission of this kind to be considered a success and an example for the future, it should not be prolonged indefinitely and without change. As circumstances on the ground evolve, the international community must be prepared to adjust the instruments of conflict resolution accordingly. This is what we want the United Nations to do in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia next year.

Sweden will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Matuszewski (Poland): The Polish delegation welcomes the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) for a final period of nine months, until the end of August 1998. UNPREDEP has played an important and highly effective role in the preservation of peace and security in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the region. On many occasions members of the Security Council have referred to this mission as one of the success stories of the United Nations, and we fully share this view. The deployment of UNPREDEP and the activities of this peacekeeping force have clearly demonstrated the justification for and the merit of the concept of preventive diplomacy. The further presence of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force will undoubtedly have a stabilizing and confidence-building effect in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the entire region.

The Polish delegation agrees with the assessment of the Secretary-General, contained in his report of 20 November 1997, that peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to depend largely on developments in other parts of the region. Indeed, an uncertain and fragile regional situation prevails. We are concerned about the increased violence in Kosovo, incidents on the border of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with Albania, slow progress in implementing the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a lack of progress in the demarcation of the border between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In the internal sphere, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has made commendable strides towards implementing democratic reforms, yet persistent socio-economic difficulties and inter-ethnic tensions are still fraught with destabilizing potential. These external and internal factors, as well as the request of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the recommendations of the Secretary-General, were taken into account by the Polish delegation in deciding to support the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP at its current strength. We look forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General on the post-UNPREDEP international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Finally, let me pay tribute to the military and civilian personnel of UNPREDEP for the dedication they have shown in performing their tasks and duties. I also wish to express my country's appreciation and support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, and to the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, for the commendable manner in which they have conducted their activities in a difficult and sensitive environment.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): At the outset, let me state that my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution extending the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) for a final period of nine months, up to 31 August 1998. Kenya is

proud to have been associated with this important mission since its inception in 1995, contributing some of our best military officers as observers. We will continue to support this and other peacekeeping operations around the world.

The presence of UNPREDEP in the region has brought about an improvement of the relations between Macedonia and some of its neighbours. Since their deployment five years ago, UNPREDEP personnel have worked hard to prevent the spillover into Macedonia of conflicts occurring elsewhere in the region. In the process, UNPREDEP has promoted conflict resolution among the various political forces and ethnic communities.

UNPREDEP has also endeavoured to reach out to the vulnerable segments of society through institution-building and experience- sharing. As stated in the Secretary-General's report, these initiatives have played an important role in building confidence between the people of the host country and the mission. Other United Nations missions, present and future, may wish to benefit from this approach, which has proved to be effective in creating a good working environment between the mission and the people of the host country. In this regard, we wish to thank the men and women of UNPREDEP for the commitment and dedication that they have demonstrated in the performance of their duties.

My delegation welcomes the signing of the joint statement by the leaders of 11 political parties on three major issues, among them the country's relations with its neighbours. This is a positive development and is quite encouraging. However, much more remains to be done in order to achieve long-term peace and stability in Macedonia. Furthermore, peace and stability in Macedonia will continue to depend largely on developments in other parts of the region. The slow progress in the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has underscored the need for a long-term commitment by the international community in that country, is a case in point.

We therefore share the views that developments in the neighbouring countries and the inherent threats they pose to Macedonia are unpredictable. For example, the fact that there are 3,500 Bosnian refugees in Macedonia while only 252 refugees have gone back to Bosnia and Herzegovina could be an indication of the level of insecurity in that country for returning refugees.

We support the Secretary-General in his observation that there is continued need for a long-term commitment by the international community in Macedonia. In this regard, we welcome the macroeconomic programmes being put in place by, among others, the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations Development Programme. These programmes are critical for Macedonia's long-term development.

In supporting the final, nine-month extension of UNPREDEP's mandate, we have taken into account the fact that the host country itself has requested such an extension. In addition, the active support and cooperation of the host Government and ethnic forces in that country is commendable. This suggests that the parties in Macedonia recognize the important role that UNPREDEP continues to play in preventing the spillover into Macedonia of conflicts occurring elsewhere in that region.

Mr. Abdel Aziz (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The delegation of Egypt supports the draft resolution before us today extending the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) for a final period of nine months, until 31 August 1998. In appreciation of that role, Egypt has supported, throughout its membership in the Council for the last two years, the resolutions under which the mandate of UNPREDEP was extended in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

With resolution 795 (1992) of 11 December 1992, the Security Council laid the basis for the first preventive peacekeeping operation under United Nations auspices by authorizing the deployment of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This contributed effectively to preventing the spread to that country of the military conflict in the region at that time.

The change of the name of that Force from UNPROFOR to UNPREDEP, in Security Council resolution 983 (1995) of 31 March 1995, reflected more clearly the successful preventive role that has been played by the United Nations peacekeeping force in that Republic. The decision to be taken by the Council today to extend the mandate of the Force for a final period five years after its initial deployment takes into account the positive developments in the region. At the same time it also highlights to a large extent time limits and other practical constraints on the United Nations role in shouldering of the full responsibility for such operations.

Undoubtedly, the experience of UNPREDEP deserves close study and analysis by the Security Council and by the Member States of the United Nations, as well as by the Secretariat, so that the successful elements of the operation can be employed in the future to effectively support the United Nations role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In this context, it is probable that the most important of these elements, which must be highlighted, is the consent, the welcome and, indeed, the initiative made by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the deployment of the Force on its territory. This was reflected later in the Government's full cooperation with the Force, which had the greatest impact in facilitating the successful discharge of its mandate.

It is our hope that the desired study by the Security Council of this preventive experience will lead to concrete conclusions that will help support the Council's credibility as regards its resolutions for the deployment of peacekeeping forces for preventive purposes in various regions and continents of the world.

As for the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we deem it important for the international community to build on the stability and the more secure environment in the Republic provided by the presence of UNPREDEP. We look forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General concerning the alternatives for the future international presence there.

Finally, I would like to express our appreciation to Mr. Henryk Sokalski, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his efforts and to the Force Commander and the personnel of the Force for their contributions and their successful discharge of their duties.

Mr. Hahm (Republic of Korea): During the course of the past five years, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the first of its kind in United Nations history, has helped restore peace and stability to a region that had once been mired in inter-ethnic turmoil and the tragedy of war.

In particular, UNPREDEP has done much to effectively contain the spillover of conflicts from neighbouring countries, to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and to improve the overall human rights situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Korean delegation very much appreciates and pays high tribute to all the UNPREDEP personnel, whose diligent efforts have made this unique preventive operation a success story thus far and provided the Macedonian people with a renewed sense of optimism for the future of their country.

While the headway made in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is certainly encouraging and surrounding circumstances have improved significantly, we share the concern of the international community at the lingering uncertainty and volatility in the adjacent regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo, among others. The concurrent lack of progress in demarcating borders with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the domestic inter-ethnic strain within Macedonia also warrant further attention.

Bearing in mind the foregoing factors, as well as the position of the host country, the Republic of Korea supports the extension of the UNPREDEP mandate and particularly welcomes the political compromise reached among members of the Security Council to extend the mandate for a final period of nine months. My delegation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution to this effect.

Finally, given the need for a continued commitment on the part of the international community to peace and stability in the region beyond this nine-month period, we strongly hope that the Secretary-General, in consultation with relevant bodies and concerned countries, including the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia itself, can in due course come up with an appropriate and viable successor arrangement to UNPREDEP.

Mr. Eguiguren (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Since its establishment more than five years ago, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has played an important role in stabilizing the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Balkan region as a whole. We value enormously the contribution that has been made by the Preventive Deployment Force in the face of changing circumstances.

However, in spite of the apparent stability in the region following the end of the recent crisis in Albania, adverse factors still persist, at varying levels of intensity. These make it inadvisable right now to bring to a close this successful first experience of the United Nations in preventive deployment.

In this context, we should consider that, in spite of the important progress made recently in relations between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, no definitive agreement has yet been reached on the delicate problem of the demarcation of their common border. Furthermore, the persistence of inter-ethnic tension and the possibility that potential difficulties in the region will have repercussions in the territory of Macedonia strengthen our conviction that the level of stability necessary for considering ending UNPREDEP has yet to be reached. Therefore, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution by which the Security Council would extend the mandate of UNPREDEP for a period of nine months and would request the Secretary-General to submit recommendations on the type of international presence that could subsequently be established in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America): The United States supports this draft resolution to extend the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We congratulate the mission, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, the mission Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Macedonia. They have ensured that UNPREDEP plays an important and highly effective role in promoting stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the region. The mission has been an unequivocal success.

We take satisfaction in the preservation of peace and stability in the region and in the gradually improving situation there. The stabilization in Albania, including through the efforts of Italy and the rest of the international community, is especially welcome, although the situation remains fragile.

All these developments have permitted the recent reduction of UNPREDEP's military force by 300 troops. This reduction demonstrates our intention to move towards an exit strategy for the mission in a measured and responsible way which preserves and builds upon the achievements of the international effort.

We remain deeply concerned, however, that significant risks remain in the region and on the borders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. There is ample evidence of increasing violence and tension in Kosovo, continuing incidents along the Albanian border and persistent problems related to border demarcation issues. These factors underline that now clearly is not the time to remove, or further reduce, the military component of this highly successful mission.

We fully support the Secretary-General's intention to consult with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with interested organizations and with interested Member States in working toward options for an appropriate successor security mechanism which will ensure that the enormous gains made by UNPREDEP are not jeopardized when the Mission's mandate ends.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Costa Rica.

My delegation is pleased to welcome the successful work of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), whose presence in the Republic of Macedonia has prevented the spread of the crisis affecting neighbouring States. My delegation considers of particular importance the work of the Force in its efforts to bring together the different communities in order to promote democratic dialogue between the different political forces and ethnic communities. Likewise, we appreciate its efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to the population and help initiate development projects, which have contributed significantly to increasing social integration.

Nevertheless, like other delegations, Costa Rica is concerned about the persistence of focal points and processes of regional destabilization. We therefore believe that the presence of this Force remains necessary, and we share the judgement of the Secretary-General that when the mandate of these operations ends there must be a guarantee of proper successor arrangements, and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia must be reassured of the international community's intention to promote peace and stability in that country.

In addition, my delegation cannot fail to highlight the importance of the activities being carried out in the country and throughout the region by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Children's Fund. These activities are essential to ensuring peace.

Costa Rica trusts that the United Nations Development Programme will soon be able to open an

office in the Republic of Macedonia, and hopes that it will serve as an active centre to stimulate and promote international cooperation and economic and social development there.

My delegation supports the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP, for the last time, to 31 August 1998.

I resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1997/948.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Chile, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (interpretation from Spanish): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1142 (1997).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Developments in the situation in Macedonia and the region, particularly after the successful handling of the acute political crisis and the stabilization of the situation in Albania, confirm how relevant and timely is restructuring of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), with the withdrawal of a military component from the operation. Clearly, the mandate established in 1991 and already successfully implemented — the mandate given to the Blue Helmets and their continued presence in Macedonia — cannot be an effective instrument for neutralizing today's risks to stability within and around the country. Therefore, on the question of the United Nations presence in Macedonia, the centre of gravity should now shift to the civilian area, bringing into play non-military international structures, primarily the civilian police.

The Russian Federation consistently supports this approach, noting the importance of strengthening the positive experience of UNPREDEP, as the United Nations first preventive peacemaking operation. However, while taking into account the position of interested parties, primarily that of Macedonia, and the recommendation by the Secretary-General, the Russian Federation has demonstrated maximum constructive flexibility and has agreed to the final — there is no doubt about that — extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP, until 31 August 1998, with the withdrawal of the military component immediately thereafter. There will be no artificial delays.

The resolution we have just adopted is relevant and clear; the wording permits no different interpretations. Like all decisions of the Security Council, it must be implemented unconditionally and clearly. A guarantee to that effect is the resolution's request to the Secretary-General to submit by 1 June 1998 a report containing concrete information on the modalities of the termination of UNPREDEP, including practical steps for the complete withdrawal of the military component immediately after 31 August 1998, since such a withdrawal will take a couple of days, as is confirmed by our recent experience in the withdrawal of United Nations military contingents from Haiti.

We also expect that the Secretary-General will make recommendations in his report on the optimum format for a further international presence in Macedonia.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.3840

Security Council

Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3840th Meeting

Thursday, 4 December 1997, 4.30 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Berrocal Soto	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Larraín
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Konishi
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Wlosowicz
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1111 (1997) (S/1997/935)

Letter dated 2 December 1997 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/942)

97-86677 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1111 (1997) (S/1997/935)

Letter dated 2 December 1997 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/942)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1111 (1997), document S/1997/935, and document S/1997/942, which contains the text of a letter dated 2 December 1997 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait addressed to the President of the Security Council. Members of the Council also have before them document S/1997/951, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The purpose of implementing the oil-for-food resolutions, resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997), is to ameliorate the humanitarian situation in Iraq. It is regrettable that, according to the report of the Secretary-General, despite the implementation of those two resolutions, the humanitarian situation in Iraq is continuing to worsen. The Iraqi people continue to face serious problems in nutrition and health care. A third of the children under five years of age and a quarter of the men and women under the age of 26 suffer from malnutrition today.

The quantity of oil sales stipulated in resolution 1111 (1997) is far from being able to satisfy Iraq's basic humanitarian needs. At the same time, owing to the slow pace of the review and approval procedure, at the conclusion of phase II there are still deliveries outstanding under phase I, and the overwhelming majority of phase II import applications have yet to be approved. Such a situation, in which the import of humanitarian goods lags far behind the export of oil, is unacceptable. China is deeply concerned about it. We urge the parties concerned to pay attention to this problem and promptly adopt practical measures to solve it.

The Chinese delegation believes that, since the current quantity of oil sales cannot satisfy the humanitarian needs of Iraq, the Security Council needs to increase the quantity of Iraq's oil exports in order to guarantee the country's essential humanitarian needs. We look forward to an early report by the Secretary-General in this regard.

At the same time, I also wish to point out that if the revenue from oil exports cannot be speedily used to meet humanitarian needs, then, no matter how much oil is exported, it will not ease Iraq's humanitarian plight. Such a situation is not in conformity with the spirit of the relevant resolutions. Therefore, we strongly urge the parties concerned to speed up the review and approval procedure so that humanitarian goods may be shipped to Iraq as soon as possible.

Out of consideration for the continued implementation of resolutions on oil for food in order to ameliorate the humanitarian situation in Iraq, the Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The delegation of Egypt would like at the outset to express its deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and lucid report on the implementation of phase II of resolution 986 (1995), known as the oil-for-food resolution. The report clearly and sincerely records the Iraqi people's continued suffering as a result of the sanctions. It also reflects, even more starkly, the insufficiency of the financial resources being devoted to alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people and the

shortcomings of the procedure being followed in the implementation of this ambitious programme.

A close examination of the implementation of the provisions of resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997) leads to several conclusions that can be summed up as follows. First, the financial resources resulting from sales of $2 billion worth of Iraqi oil every six months are insufficient to deal with the severe humanitarian crisis the people of Iraq are suffering. Secondly, the implementation of phases I and II of the oil-for-food programme has led to financial accumulations from oil sales in the escrow account, which, according to the latest estimate, have reached more than $300 million, while contracts for the purchase of humanitarian supplies for the people of Iraq are being scuttled by the slow pace of proceedings in the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 661 (1990) or as a result of routine financial procedures.

All of these obstacles prevent the achievement of the careful balance that must be struck between the Iraqi oil sales, which of course are not an end in themselves, and meeting the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, which is the ultimate objective for which we are all striving.

The delegation of Egypt welcomes the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his recent report on these two problems. First, he recommends that the Security Council re-examine the adequacy of the revenues envisaged in resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997) and consider the possibility of increasing those revenues in order to meet Iraq's priority humanitarian requirements. Egypt strongly supports this recommendation.

Secondly, the Secretary-General directs the United Nations Office of the Iraq Programme, headed by its Executive Director, Mr. Benon Sevan, to formulate recommendations that would ensure provision of the necessary goods at the appropriate time without obstacles, to address concerns over processing and supply issues, and to devise a new system to clearly identify interrelated applications and then bring them to the attention of the Security Council Committee.

We also welcome the Secretary-General's intention to provide as soon as possible a supplementary report containing the results of a study of the situation, as well as concrete recommendations, in order to achieve the ultimate objectives of resolution 986 (1995) and the subsequent resolution.

In the light of the recommendations of the Secretary-General, and taking into account the urgent humanitarian nature of this question, the delegation of Egypt had hoped that the draft resolution before us today would reflect a preliminary agreement by the members of the Security Council to increase the amount of oil that Iraq would be allowed to sell in order to deal with the urgent humanitarian needs, and that the extent of this increase would be considered in the light of the supplementary report of the Secretary-General on this question. But the negotiations yesterday and today, during which all delegations showed a high degree of flexibility, have made it clear that there is an agreement to deal with this question by increasing revenues from oil sales, as well as to adopt the necessary procedures to develop and improve the working methods of the sanctions Committee and the Secretariat in a manner that would ensure the delivery of humanitarian relief in order to meet the needs of the Iraqi people in parallel with oil sales. This must be implemented when the supplementary report of the Secretary-General, expected at the end of January, is available, in order to allow Iraq to make full use of this programme.

In view of the foregoing — and taking into account the importance of renewing the validity of this resolution, given its urgent humanitarian nature, as well as the additions to its provisions, which have become more balanced, and which affirm that the Council will consider the situation once again when it receives the supplementary report of the Secretary-General at the end of January — the delegation of Egypt will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): The humanitarian situation in Iraq, described in unequivocal terms in the report of the Secretary-General, gives rise to deep concern. The population of Iraq, in particular children, continues to face a serious nutritional and health situation. There is an urgent need to contain the risk of further deterioration.

Sweden fully supports the recommendation by the Secretary-General to extend the so-called oil-for-food mechanism established by resolution 986 (1995). This mechanism is an important instrument to help alleviate the current plight of the Iraqi population.

Improvements to the mechanism can and should be made. Sweden commends the initiative of the Secretary-General to conduct a thorough review of the oil-for-food programme and to submit a supplementary report at the beginning of 1998, containing his recommendations on

ways to streamline the arrangements. We support, and will actively contribute to, all endeavours aimed at achieving a more targeted, focused and flexible approach to address the humanitarian situation in Iraq. An increase of the revenues through the sale of more oil, together with improvements to the implementation of the programme, could make this instrument more effective. In due time, Sweden would like the Council to be ready to consider favourably the recommendations by the Secretary-General to this effect.

At the same time, the oil-for-food programme under resolution 986 (1995) cannot alone satisfy all the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. The Government of Iraq bears a heavy responsibility towards its population. The allocation of national resources to meet humanitarian needs is therefore essential.

Sweden supports the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): The humanitarian plight of the Iraqi people has been a source of continuing concern to us. We are especially concerned by the report of the Secretary-General that serious nutritional and health problems, in particular for vulnerable groups, persist in Iraq, despite the efforts made by the international community under resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997). My delegation firmly believes that the oil-for-food programme envisaged in these resolutions should continue in an uninterrupted and smooth manner.

It is for this reason that we support the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend once again the relevant provisions of resolution 986 (1995) for another six months. We also take note of his suggestions to re-examine the adequacy of the revenues envisaged by resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997) in due course, and look forward to his supplementary report in this regard.

Indeed, the oil-for-food programme is unprecedented and unique in its nature. Its implementation process is bound to be complex, given the magnitude of all the attendant political, commercial and humanitarian dimensions. Since the beginning of the programme a year ago, enormous efforts have been made by the international community to set up the modalities for its effective implementation and refine them on an ongoing basis. In this regard, we acknowledge with appreciation the efforts made by the Secretary-General as well as the sanctions Committee thus far to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall implementation process of the programme.

The Secretary-General has taken a number of measures to address problems identified through the workings of the three tiers of United Nations observation. In particular, we welcome the Secretary-General's recent initiative to establish the Office of the Iraq Programme and entrust it with the task of better coordinating and facilitating overall aspects of the implementation of the programme. The Office will play a catalytic role in taking stock of the experiences gained through phases I and II and in moving the programme ahead. We have full confidence in the leadership of the Secretary-General to guide the implementation of the oil-for-food programme towards greater effectiveness, equitability and adequacy.

The sanctions Committee on Iraq also continues to define its working methods and procedures and we expect it to conduct a thorough review of all aspects of its work. It is our sincere hope that through these continuing efforts, the delivery of humanitarian supplies to the civilian population in Iraq will be expedited in the coming months, so that we can see the humanitarian purpose of the oil-for-food programme fulfilled to the fullest possible extent.

My delegation finds that the draft resolution before us addresses the aforementioned points well and in a comprehensive and balanced manner, and therefore we will vote in favour of it.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): The draft resolution we have before us, which my delegation fully supports, is not just a simple renewal of Security Council resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997). While addressing specific aspects, in order to allow for a smoother transition to the next phase of its implementation, the draft represents a decisive step in humanitarian operations in Iraq.

It clearly states the Council's intention to avoid further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in that country, and to find ways of meeting more efficiently and adequately the priority humanitarian requirements of the Iraqi people. My delegation strongly supports these objectives, as well as an increase in the amount of oil sales permitted. But it is not only a question of increasing the amount of oil revenues. Funds are very important and irreplaceable, but also important, in our view, is how best they can be used to achieve the expected goals. It is necessary to face the problems as a whole, understand their complexity and find ways to solve the difficulties rapidly, while always bearing in mind the objective we want to pursue and the human dimension of the programme.

As important as increasing the funds is achieving the desired result: the alleviation of the suffering of the Iraqi people. The serious nutrition and health problems clearly identified in the Secretary-General's report are realities that we must rapidly attack with adequate measures. These are crucial aspects of the day-to-day life endured by the Iraqis.

The Council should address these questions, looking particularly at the plight of the most vulnerable groups in Iraq. The situation of children is especially distressing, since they are suffering all the effects of the current difficulties precisely when they most need all possible support for their physical and psychological development. Other vulnerable groups are also identified in the Secretary-General's report, and we hope they will be helped by specific programmes to meet their needs, designed in cooperation with the Iraqi authorities.

Our intention is to state clearly that the task we face is to work on solutions that could produce rapid, positive results in these areas and for these groups. We can benefit from the experience and knowledge of the United Nations agencies in the field and other humanitarian actors. They have expertise and can advise us on the best way to achieve those results.

We have an important task ahead of us. We strongly welcome the Secretary-General's initiatives to assist us in the search for adequate solutions that could improve the efficiency of this humanitarian operation. We look forward very positively to the recommendations and conclusions he will present at the end of January in his supplementary report.

As Chairman of the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990), I can assure the Council that all Committee members will spare no effort to contribute to improving the methods of work of the Committee in order to expedite the approval of contracts and refine the overall mechanism to ensure the supply of goods. This can only be done in close coordination with the Secretariat and with the political support of this Council.

We must not forget that no positive results can be achieved without the cooperation of the Iraqi authorities. The importance and urgency of attaining the aforementioned objectives should not, in our view, be subject to dispute or conflicting political opinions. We are confident that we will gather the cooperation of all interested parties.

Mr. Larraín (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The draft resolution to be submitted to the vote contains a compromise text which we believe fully responds to the humanitarian concerns which inspired Security Council resolution 986 (1995). The validity of that resolution is rightly renewed, which demonstrates that the Council has once again shouldered its responsibilities in the humanitarian sphere.

My country believes that the programme established in resolution 986 (1995) is complementary to the efforts that must be carried out by the Government of Iraq to attend to the needs of its population. The Government of Iraq thus has serious obligations with respect to the implementation of this programme, which are independent from the responsibilities that fall to the various United Nations organs. We believe that this key aspect must be taken into account in making decisions on the basic aspects of resolution 986 (1995), such as, for instance, the amount indicated in paragraph 1 of that resolution.

The current programme could undoubtedly be improved, as is indicated in the Secretary-General's report, which identifies specific problems that have been detected in its implementation. But in seeking solutions we must also bear in mind that the Iraqi people is the final recipient of this programme.

Among these problems, we are particularly concerned by the situation of the vulnerable groups of central and southern Iraq. We hail the Secretary-General's efforts in that connection, as a result of which assurances have been obtained from the Iraqi Government that it will attend to their humanitarian needs. We hope that the Iraqi Government will deepen this commitment and make it concrete by furnishing complete information with respect to the measures that Government adopts with regard to those vulnerable groups. My delegation thus awaits with great interest the recommendations to be made by the Secretary-General in his supplementary report to the Council at the end of January.

My delegation supports the contents of the draft resolution submitted to this Council. We are pleased, in particular, that the text contemplates mechanisms to ensure that the oil-for-food programme will not be subject to possible interruptions for purely administrative reasons. Anything else would have been nothing less than a betrayal of the spirit of resolution 986 (1995) and would have exposed the Iraqi people to a humanitarian crisis of considerable proportions.

We also believe it important that the draft resolution appeals to the Government of Iraq to ensure the security and protection of all persons appointed by the Secretary-General in the context of the implementation of this resolution. This is a timely reminder and a precondition for the creation of a climate that will be conducive to the unhampered application of this draft resolution.

In conclusion, we are convinced that the draft resolution before the Council is in line with the humanitarian goals of resolution 986 (1995), for which reason my delegation will vote in favour of it.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): Today's draft resolution on Iraq addresses the desperate humanitarian situation in that country and our reaction to it through the oil-for-food programme initiated in 1995 under Security Council resolution 986 (1995). The programme thus authorized sought and continues to seek to mitigate the negative effects of the sanctions regime on Iraq. In supporting this draft resolution, we are acutely aware of the problems that continue to plague the implementation of the humanitarian programme in Iraq.

The present renewal is viewed against the backdrop of the recently heightened tensions between Iraq and the United Nations, which precipitated a crisis, and the report of the Secretary-General dated 28 November 1997 submitted pursuant to paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 1111 (1997), prior to the end of 180-day period, on the overall implementation of the programme. At the height of these tensions, and during the standoff between Iraq and the United Nations, the attention of the international community was drawn to the acute humanitarian situation, which has caused immense suffering among innocent civilians in Iraq. The diplomatic activities that followed added impetus to the growing momentum at the United Nations and elsewhere for the Council urgently to address the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

In our view, therefore, the two questions we should ask ourselves as the Council considers the renewal of resolution 986 (1995) for an additional 180 days are, first, where does the problem lie with regard to this rather difficult situation? And secondly, what should be done to mitigate the suffering occasioned by the sanctions on the innocent civilian population?

In answer to these questions, we have to look at the Secretary-General's report and his briefing today as well as at the external reports of the United Nations agencies involved in the implementation of the programme on the ground. They all agree that the delivery and distribution of food and medicine in Iraq has progressed according to plan and that the Iraqi Government and local authorities have cooperated in this regard. The Executive Director of the Office of the Iraq Programme, Mr. Benon Sevan, who has just returned from Iraq, has confirmed that this is the case in the field. In this regard, let me just add a word of commendation to him and his team for doing an excellent job under difficult circumstances.

The Secretary-General, while acknowledging the considerable improvements made in the approval process under phase II, is of the view that much remains to be done to ensure an overall increase in the speed of implementation of the programme. We know — and this is a view shared by many observers outside this Council — that notwithstanding the efforts of the Security Council Committee, its working methods remain cumbersome and time-consuming and must, in the words of the Secretary-General, "be urgently addressed". We know that the Chairman of that Committee, our colleague Ambassador António Monteiro, has exerted immense efforts to alleviate this problem, for which we commend him.

It is therefore necessary to re-examine the whole process of the implementation of resolution 986 (1995) and how it has fared. Unfortunately, that resolution created expectations that have become difficult, if not impossible, to meet under existing arrangements. For this reason, there has to be a genuine attempt to improve the humanitarian situation.

According to the report of the Secretary-General, there is a need to adjust upwards the $2 billion worth of oil exports. We agree with the Secretary-General that the amount is inadequate to meet the humanitarian requirements of the Iraqi people and that they continue to face a serious nutritional and health situation. After all, out of this $2 billion, only $1.23 billion goes to the purchase of humanitarian goods. It is also of concern that problems such as the slow and erratic pace at which humanitarian inputs arrive in Iraq, the operating difficulties of the distribution system, and the deteriorating basic infrastructure in the various key sectors responsible for providing social services continue to hamper the implementation process. The Secretary-General tells us that the poor state of the infrastructure has undermined the value of humanitarian inputs, and he is right. This is an important issue because in every

decision we take, we must bear in mind the humanitarian dimension in its implementation.

It is with this in mind that we welcome the Secretary-General's intention to undertake a systematic review of the whole process of contracting, processing of applications, approvals, procurement and shipment and distribution. This should be conducted urgently and should address comprehensively the issues I have mentioned.

We look forward to the Secretary-General's supplementary report intended to address these issues by the end of January 1998. That report should look into all problems and avoid a piecemeal approach in response to the many concerns.

Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland): The Security Council is about to adopt a draft resolution extending the relevant provisions of resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997) for a further period of six months to ensure the continuity of the oil-for-food programme instituted by this Council as a temporary and subsidiary measure to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Iraq and mitigate the unintended effects of measures imposed on that country.

The Polish delegation remains strongly committed to the humanitarian objectives of the programme, whose complexity and unique character has been underlined by the Secretary-General in his latest report concerning this issue.

Having examined this document, we note with great concern that despite the ongoing implementation of the humanitarian programme for almost 12 months now, the people in Iraq continue to be confronted with serious nutritional shortages and a lack of adequate health care. In addressing this very serious and painful problem, we wish to reaffirm our view that full normalization of the critical humanitarian situation of the Iraqi population will be possible only after Iraq has fulfilled its obligations by responding in a positive and decisive fashion to the Security Council decisions, thus allowing the Council to lift the present sanctions regime.

Nevertheless, we believe that at this juncture the Security Council, which is determined to avoid any further deterioration of the current humanitarian crisis, should make every effort to ensure that the programme under resolution 986 (1995) effectively addresses the essential needs of the Iraqi people, who are bearing the brunt of the sanctions regime.

We share the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General in his report, and we see an urgent need to review, and possibly improve, the process of the implementation of the programme in all of its aspects, including procedures and working methods; the level of necessary cooperation of the Iraqi authorities; the unsatisfactory pace of the arrival of humanitarian supplies in Iraq; the operating difficulties of the distribution system; the nutritional value of the current food basket, especially in relation to the pressing needs of the vulnerable groups; and the adequacy of the revenues currently envisaged to meet Iraq's priority humanitarian requirements.

With regard to the latter issue, we note with concern the observation of the Secretary-General contained in his report that even if all of the humanitarian supplies provided under resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997) were to arrive in time in Iraq, they would be insufficient to address, even as a temporary measure, all the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, given their scale and urgency.

In this context, we wish to express our satisfaction at the fact that the present draft resolution notes with appreciation the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the Council re-examine the adequacy of revenues and consider the possibility o£ increasing them in accordance with the priority needs to be determined by the Secretary-General.

I wish to point out that we are grateful to the Secretary-General for the steps he has already taken to define those priority requirements, and we welcome his readiness to submit to the Council the results of this work by the end of January next year.

We are confident that the Council will find ways to respond positively to all of the Secretary-General's recommendations on how best to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people by enhancing the efficiency and adequacy of the programme.

We note with appreciation the progress that has been made by the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) in refining and clarifying its working procedures, and we endorse the encouragement addressed to the Committee in the present draft resolution to continue its efforts in that direction in order to expedite the approval process.

Finally, we wish to express our earnest hope that the present draft resolution, as well as the efforts that will be undertaken by the Council as a follow-up to the supplementary report of the Secretary-General, will contribute effectively to the alleviation of the acute humanitarian crisis in Iraq. That is a goal shared by all members of the Security Council as well as by the international community at large.

Poland will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): It was necessary to extend the humanitarian provisions of resolution 986 (1995). But, in the light of the report of the Secretary-General, for which we thank him, and in the light of the scope of the humanitarian disaster in Iraq, such an extension is not enough. We should have gone further. Some, including France, felt that it would have been possible to broaden the existing machinery and substantially increase the available funding. Several delegations did not feel that the moment had come to improve resolution 986 (1995) despite the urgency of the situation and despite public statements to that effect made here just a month ago. We can be pleased, however, that everyone agreed at least on the need to tackle this matter very quickly, within two months. That time-frame will enable us to conduct a thorough review of the matter and to consider it on the basis of the proposals that the Secretary-General will be making, which we trust will be as concrete as possible.

The draft resolution is clear. The Council would welcome the report of the Secretary-General and would note with appreciation the recommendations in that report. The Council would then express its determination to avoid any further deterioration of the current humanitarian situation. The Security Council would then indicate three main ways to reverse the trend.

The first of these is to improve the procedures of the sanctions Committee. The Committee will be reporting to the Council no later than 30 January 1998. It is truly unacceptable that only 15 per cent of phase II contracts have been approved and that 15 per cent of phase I goods have not yet arrived at their destinations in Iraq. Admittedly there has been some progress in the past few months: on the initiative of the Secretary-General, the distribution plan has been computerized; monitoring has been reorganized and consolidated through the establishment of the Office of the Iraq Programme, also on the initiative of the Secretary-General. I note too that the procedures in the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) have somewhat improved, permitting contracts to be approved more rapidly under phase II than they were under phase I.

But much remains to be done. Transparency must be increased, especially in the financial area and with respect to the motives, or pretexts, for delaying the approval of contracts. The Secretariat staff must be enlarged so that more tasks can be delegated to it, as with the sale of Iraqi oil, where most of the supervision is being carried out by the overseers.

The second point outlined in the draft resolution is that the procedures for authorizing and acquiring goods could be significantly improved. The Council agrees. I am certain that in his assessment the Secretary-General will propose useful measures in this respect.

The third and last point is that an increase in resources and thus in the oil income allocated to humanitarian aid is indispensable. The Council would clearly indicate that it is inclined to permit such an increase. The aim would be to increase food rations and improve the distribution of medicines and health supplies, and also, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General, to repair infrastructure. The condition of the infrastructure is extremely poor; this is one of the main reasons for the current lamentable health situation of the Iraqi people. Very significant resources are required for this purpose. The figure most often mentioned by the humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations in Baghdad is $4 billion, against the present $2 billion. I think that figure is a reasonable one, pending consideration of this matter by the Secretary-General.

It is good that the Council has been able on these three main points to indicate clearly the course and the spirit that should govern our consideration of the supplementary report that will be submitted by the Secretary-General.

The Council has also been able to demonstrate pragmatism and realism on the distribution plan. As the plan could not be prepared in time, the Council will agree to propose a mechanism that will make it possible to ease this problem, for no longer than one month. During that period, oil sales will enable Iraq to buy medicines, health supplies and food without interruption. Also, to make the system more flexible, the draft resolution would allow the time frame to be reviewed. Specifically, we are thinking of seeking more flexible

formulas to avoid setting three-month ceilings on oil sales, which create crises and disruption on the oil markets.

The direction as set out in the draft resolution is clear, but we must quickly draw the proper conclusions. It is intolerable that the Iraqi people should continue to suffer forever. These are no mere words; the suffering is real. According to United Nations agencies, 11 per cent of children under age five suffer from acute malnutrition and 31 per cent from chronic malnutrition. The Secretary-General observes that the food ration of 2,030 calories is inadequate, and must be improved and increased. United Nations observers report an exceptionally serious deterioration in the health infrastructure, which is an underlying reason for the high infant mortality rate. Let me cite some information from the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund. Infant mortality went from 24 per 1,000 in 1990 to 168 per 1,000 in 1996, a sevenfold increase. Deaths among children under five years of age have tripled, going from 1,500 per month to 4,500 per month in 1996. Since 1990 the mortality rate among those over 50 has tripled. I shall say no more.

Those are the facts. It is good that a consensus could emerge on this perceptive and sombre diagnosis and on the need to remedy the humanitarian situation. My delegation will support the draft resolution, which reflects that consensus. We hope that the consensus will hold in two months' time when we will have to adopt the necessary reform of resolution 986 (1995).

Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): Our purpose this evening is not to put Iraq on trial or to go back over international events in recent weeks showing that relations between Iraq and the Special Commission had deteriorated.

You, Mr. President, informed the international community, and Iraq in particular, of the Security Council's position through a Council statement in which you recalled certain principles and the need for Iraq to abide by certain Council decisions.

Today the Security Council wants to show once again that it draws a distinction between the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people. The Council wants to show eloquently that it never intended to punish the Iraqi people; that it rightly wanted to impose sanctions on a Government that had violated the United Nations Charter, though it has always been aware of the suffering of an innocent people.

By adopting resolution 986 (1995), the Security Council wanted to indicate clearly its awareness of the realities in Iraq, which remind us that there are vulnerable sectors of society that are suffering and that there are children who do not receive proper nourishment, do not get enough food to turn them into tomorrow's upright men and women — people able to take part in building their country, citizens of the world who could someday sit at this table to discuss and decide with us what should be done in order to bring about world peace, which is something we all desire.

From the report submitted to the Security Council by the Secretary-General, the Council has seen that there are serious shortages in Iraq and that it is necessary for all Council members, as well as for the rest of the international community, to respond to the appeal from Baghdad — a distress call from a people which itself is the victim of schemes that are surely incoherent, perhaps irresponsible and most definitely in violation of international law.

This evening we have gathered together to tell the Iraqi people that we have nothing against them, that we are aware of their suffering and that in our discussions we wanted to see and to decide how we can contribute to alleviating their suffering. Security Council resolution 986 (1995) was not designed to resolve all of the problems of the Iraqi people. This cannot be done since, as everyone knows, it is the responsibility of the Iraqi Government to contribute not only to the development of its country but also to the well-being of its people.

However, there is a situation we must all understand. As suggested by the Secretary-General, we must bring a human viewpoint to this debate and remember our common humanity while contemplating what we propose to do.

This is the point we have reached, and this is what the draft resolution we are about to adopt is intended to express. In the draft resolution we acknowledge that there are shortcomings; we acknowledge that improvements should be made; we recognize that resolution 986 (1995) established a process that was new, that for the United Nations had no precedent, that could serve as a line of conduct and that would help us implement a proper procedure that would be approved of by the international community as a whole.

We saw that it was necessary to correct certain shortcomings and that it was necessary to remember that

in Iraq there are children who are suffering, sick people who cannot get treatment and children who do not go to school. We had a duty to respond to those needs, and that is what we have done.

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to say how much we welcome the great courage shown in recognizing that we have the duty not to remain indifferent to what is happening in Iraq, not to remain indifferent in the face of the suffering of a people that is itself a victim. We will never forget, of course, that it is the responsibility of the Iraqi leadership to redress this situation. It is up to them to subscribe to and to respect the relevant Security Council resolutions and to ensure that the Special Commission can conclude its work quickly so that the sanctions can be lifted. But in the meantime, this evening we have the responsibility to respond, albeit modestly, to the appeal that has come to us from Iraq, as well as to the message to us from the Secretary-General.

The draft resolution asks that we spare no effort to ensure that the mechanisms that were created be improved, that certain shortcomings be resolved and that we respond quickly to the pressing needs of the Iraqis for the humanitarian aid that we want to dispatch to them. We have seen that we ought to review the mechanisms, the modus operandi and the very working methods of the sanctions Committee established under resolution 661 (1990). We all agree on the need to contribute constructively to improving the Committee's modus operandi. But perhaps we should also recall that all of us seated around this table are also members of that Committee, that if there are shortcomings then we are all responsible, and that if there is any possibility of improving the working methods of that Committee, then perhaps we are all called upon to display more willingness in that regard.

Let me say, on behalf of my delegation, that we agree with what the Secretary-General says in his report. We agree with what he advocates. We agree with what he so courageously recommends: that we re-examine the revenues and consider how much we might be able — and I hope in the near future — to add to Iraq's resources, so that the Committee, within the requisite norms, can approve the requests to provide all the humanitarian aid required to meet the needs of the Iraqi population.

We hope that when the plan is adopted, and when the Secretary-General submits his latest thoughts on the need that we are already recognizing today — that of increasing oil revenues — on behalf of my delegation, I hope that this Council will be true to itself and that it will respond to this heartfelt call to all of us to stand up, show our humanity, respond to this urgent distress call and respond favourably to the need to help the Iraqi people — its children and its elderly people, who are all suffering and who are looking to us this evening for a glimmer of hope.

Mr. Konishi (Japan): Throughout the process of the adoption and implementation of resolution 986 (1995), Japan consistently supported its objective: to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, who are suffering from the impact of sanctions. My delegation is concerned about the Secretary-General's observation in his report that, despite the ongoing implementation of resolution 986 (1995), the population of Iraq continues to face serious nutritional and health situations and there is an urgent need to contain the risk of a further deterioration.

In renewing the provisions of Security Council resolution 986 (1995), my delegation is guided by the practical consideration of ensuring the smooth and efficient implementation of the resolution. The Secretary-General's report indicates that the slow and erratic pace at which humanitarian inputs arrive in Iraq has been very unsatisfactory, and it expresses his intention to submit to the Council a supplementary report with recommendations addressing concerns over processing and supply issues.

The report of the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) also states that it will continue to work for the smooth and effective implementation of the relevant arrangements under resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997). We support these efforts of the Secretary-General and the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990), and my delegation will continue to contribute actively to this process.

We have noted with particular interest the Secretary-General's suggestion that the Council may wish to re-examine the adequacy of the revenues as envisaged by resolutions 986 (1995) and 1111 (1997) and to consider the possibility of increasing those revenues to meet Iraq's priority humanitarian requirements. Japan is ready to consider this matter favourably, based on the supplementary report to be submitted by the Secretary-General, taking into account the relevant aspects, such as the specific humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

In paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, the Council would express its willingness to consider these issues in the light of the recommendations of the Secretary-General to be included in the supplementary report.

For these reasons, my delegation will support the draft resolution.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Russia is deeply concerned about the scale of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq, with its very serious consequences. The Secretary-General's report to the Council contains an exhaustive picture of the truly disastrous situation of broad sectors of the Iraqi people. The present food ration for the Iraqis is still inadequate. The problem of chronic malnutrition persists. United Nations observers note a serious deterioration in the health infrastructure and a continuing shortage of basic medicines and medical equipment, all of which lead to an increase in the mortality rate, particularly among children, and there is a growing threat of epidemics.

In referring to the reasons for inadequate supplies of humanitarian goods, we should not evade the question of the blocking of contracts in the sanctions Committee. The blocking of humanitarian applications, particularly in the early stages of the implementation of the "humanitarian resolution", led to months of delay and the destabilization of the whole dynamics of the delivery of basic supplies, including the most necessary medicines. An overwhelming proportion of the goods provided for under resolution 1111 (1997) have still not reached Iraq, to say nothing about the question of distributing them among the people.

One strong element of the Secretary-General's report is the comprehensive approach he takes to the problems of food and health. It is unthinkable that we can solve those problems if parallel measures are not taken with regard to electricity and water supplies and to agriculture. The quantity and range of the spare parts and equipment supplied are insufficient to provide the population with drinking water, and there is a continuing drop in the production of electricity, which undermines the real value of the humanitarian inputs.

We fully support the approach reflected in the Secretary-General's report aimed at increasing revenues in order to meet the priority humanitarian needs of Iraq. Together with other members of the Security Council, we welcome the leadership shown by the Secretary-General in addressing the issue of overcoming the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. The establishment of the Office of the Iraq Programme will help in this effort.

The intensive consultations held over the past two days led to substantive discussions about ways of implementing the oil-for-humanitarian goods formula. Proposals were made by, *inter alia*, my own delegation which, in one way or another, were finally reflected in the draft resolution. In particular, the draft resolution states that the present distribution plan will continue to apply to foodstuffs, medicine and health supplies, pending the Secretary-General's approval of a new plan, to be submitted by Iraq within a month. This would ensure that there would be no interruption in the process of providing humanitarian supplies to Iraq.

In general, we start from the premise that the decision we are going to take today is interim in nature. It is a kind of prelude to a thorough review in the Security Council of the main issues relating to the implementation of the oil-for-humanitarian goods formula. Such a review will take place within the context of the consideration of the supplementary report to be submitted by the Secretary-General in January 1998, with recommendations about specific ways of improving the implementation of the humanitarian programme and allocating additional funds for this purpose.

Russia believes that the amount of oil exports must be increased to some $4 billion per six-month period. This is the only way to provide adequate financing for humanitarian purchases. Of course, this will make sense only if the practice of blocking humanitarian contracts in the sanctions Committee is ended. There has long been a need to rescind the so-called interim quota of $1 billion per quarter, which applies to oil exports from Iraq. It is an artificial limitation that has already led to serious complications in the implementation of resolution 1111 (1997). In this connection, the draft resolution contains an important provision, which expresses the Council's willingness, in the light of the Secretary-General's supplementary report, to change the time-frame and to consider the possibility of additional resources. In this context, we should also return to the question of the interim three-month quotas.

We would have preferred the draft resolution to be stronger and for other ideas, expressed by many delegations, to be reflected in it. However, as it stands it represents a step forward, and on the whole it meets the need for the continuation of the humanitarian programme. Accordingly, and taking account of its interim nature, the

Russian delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America): Today the Council will once again act with dispatch to address the pressing humanitarian needs of those most in need in Iraq. Credit should go the United Kingdom for its leadership on this issue.

In his report to the Council, the Secretary-General identifies ongoing problems and concerns attending the implementation of the programme established under resolution 986 (1995). He notes the serious nutritional and health situation affecting the most vulnerable groups in Iraq; the sometimes slow pace of delivery of humanitarian goods to Iraq; and difficulties with their distribution once those goods arrive in the country.

We take all these problems very seriously, and believe they must be addressed on an urgent basis. We therefore welcome the commitment of the Secretary-General to prepare a thorough and systematic study of the entire resolution 986 (1995) process. This study will be an immeasurable help to the Council.

We are willing, in the light of the recommendations of the Secretary-General, not only to find ways of improving the implementation of the humanitarian programme, but also to consider additional resources which may be needed to meet the priority humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq.

As I have said, the Council has acted with dispatch to address the humanitarian concerns of the Iraqi people. Iraq should now do the same. Iraq should stop playing politics with resolution 986 (1995) contracts.

Iraq should stop submitting resolution 986 (1995) contracts that fail to meet the prima facie criteria and procedures that Iraq agreed to, and in some cases insisted upon, with the United Nations Secretariat.

Iraq should end its threats — made as recently as late last week — to cease cooperation with the United Nations on this programme unless its excessive demands for changes are met.

The Government of Iraq should restore the food ration for each Iraqi citizen that was cut by the Government even as more food was flowing into the country.

And Iraq should never again unilaterally and inexplicably interrupt the sales of oil that the Council has authorized to help feed the Iraqi people. I point out that by operative paragraph 2 of this draft resolution the Council would specifically decide:

> "that the provisions of the distribution plan in respect of goods purchased in accordance with resolution 1111 (1997) shall continue to apply to foodstuffs, medicine and health supplies purchased in accordance with this resolution pending the Secretary-General's approval of a new distribution plan".

We are including this language so that, despite the Iraqi leadership's not having submitted a distribution plan on time, the flow of food and medicine to the Iraqi people will not be interrupted.

In short, we call upon the Iraqi leadership to demonstrate as much compassion for the Iraqi people as the Security Council has by adopting resolutions 986 (1995), 1111 (1997) and 1129 (1997), and will demonstrate once again by adopting this draft resolution today.

I think by now it should be clear to all where genuine concern for the welfare of the Iraqi people resides. This concern has been unshaken by the determined efforts of the Iraqi Government to undercut the Security Council and its resolutions at every turn. My Government will continue to support the resolution 986 (1995) humanitarian programme, because it was the right thing to do when the resolution was adopted in 1995, and it remains the right thing to do now.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1997/951.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Chile, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1143 (1997).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Gomersall (United Kingdom): The Council has just voted unanimously to continue its work to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people by extending the oil-for-food programme for a further six months. We deplore the fact that the Iraqi regime chooses to let this suffering continue. It could be swiftly ended if Iraq complied with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Although the Government of Iraq may be indifferent to the plight of the Iraqi people, this resolution demonstrates that the international community is not. As one of the sponsors of resolution 986 (1995), the United Kingdom attaches great importance to the success of the oil-for-food programme as a temporary measure. The Secretary-General's report clearly highlights why the oil-for-food programme must continue. Reports that 31 per cent of Iraqi children under the age of five are chronically malnourished are indeed alarming.

The Secretary-General's report, however, reveals significant delays in the delivery of essential humanitarian supplies. We welcome the examination of the programme which is now being undertaken by the Secretary-General through the Executive Director of the Office of the Iraq Programme. It is important that we have a thorough analysis of the reasons for the delays and proposals for remedying them at all relevant points in the chain.

With regard to food and medicines, in particular, we do not believe that the bulk of the problems lie with the sanctions Committee. We also need an equally careful analysis of the adequacy of existing resources. We look forward to receiving the results of the Secretary-General's review and are ready to consider positively all recommendations for improving the implementation of the programme, including possible increases in the quantity of oil to be sold.

The Government of Iraq also has an essential role for which it should be held accountable. It must produce a distribution plan on time and it must demonstrate its own efforts to give priority to feeding its people. The purposes of this resolution are not to substitute for the efforts of the Government of Iraq or to provide them with the luxury of building palaces, as described with unaccountable pride by Mr. Tariq Aziz in his letter of 26 November. We hope that the Secretary-General's team can put these points clearly to the Government of Iraq so that we maintain the credibility and purpose of the programme.

My Government also urges the Government of Iraq not to delay exports of oil under this resolution, as it did last summer. The Council has made provision in this resolution to roll over the provisions of the distribution plan in order to compensate for the fact that Iraq has not yet submitted a new distribution plan. As is clear from the Secretary-General's report, any delay in oil sales will only result in further delays in the arrival of humanitarian goods. We hope that Baghdad will not again neglect the welfare of its own people in this manner.

We conclude with our initial point, that this temporary mechanism and the suffering of the Iraqi people would be unnecessary were it not for Iraq's constant evasion over the last six years of its obligations under resolution 687 (1991) and other related resolutions. The Council has made clear both its determination to achieve Iraq's full compliance with those resolutions and the benefits which will flow from compliance. We hope that this message is being received by the Iraqi people. We hope, indeed, that this message will be transmitted to the people by the agencies of the United Nations present in Iraq, and we hope that the message will be acted on by the Iraqi Government.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Costa Rica.

My delegation is pleased to support the extension of the oil-for-food programme for an additional period of 180 days, and has therefore lent its support to the draft resolution we have just adopted, which takes into account the important and positive recommendations and comments made by the Secretary-General in his most recent and valuable report.

The aim of this programme, which is unique in its magnitude and importance in the history of the United Nations, is to alleviate Iraq's difficult humanitarian situation. The very serious health and nutrition conditions besetting the Iraqi population compel the Security Council to take effective and urgent action.

While it is true that sanctions are not the only cause of the difficult humanitarian situation facing the people of Iraq, and that the Government and the political and military authorities of that country are to a large extent responsible, there is no doubt that the existence of sanctions has an impact on measures that the Iraqi authorities should themselves take to resolve the humanitarian problem once and for all.

In the context of the legal regime established by the Charter, sanctions regimes constitute a legitimate means of collective defence for the international community. Costa Rica is aware of the responsibility and risks involved in using such regimes, especially when sanctions affect the humanitarian situation of civilian populations. In this connection, the actions of the Security Council must be guided first and foremost by an awareness of such humanitarian situations.

In the specific case of Iraq, Costa Rica believes that in view of the serious humanitarian situation in that country the Council will have to give positive consideration to whether current revenues, as well as increased revenues, are adequate to meet the priority humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. In this regard, we believe that the resolution just adopted represents for the United Nations an important step towards improving the humanitarian situation. In this connection, we attach the utmost importance to the supplementary report — expected by late January — that the Secretary-General is to present in order to evaluate and decide upon the situation. In the same context, the sanctions Committee and the Secretariat must redouble efforts to improve and make truly efficient the process of approving and processing contracts, as well as the supply of foodstuffs, medicines and related items for the Iraqi people.

We are very pleased by the unanimity of the Security Council in favour of the resolution, which is essentially humanitarian in nature.

I resume my function as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.3841

Security Council

Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3841st Meeting

Tuesday, 16 December 1997, 1 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Berrocal Soto	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Eguiguren
	China	Mr. Cui Tiankai
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Lopes Da Rosa
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Ms. Gomes
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Won Soo Kim
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/1997/894)

97-86758 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 1.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/1997/894)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, document S/1997/894.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security of 14 November 1997 (A/52/682-S/1997/894), which was also considered by the General Assembly.

"The Security Council reiterates its grave concern at the continued military confrontation in Afghanistan, which has caused human suffering and material destruction, which threatens to lead to the disintegration of the country and which represents a growing threat to regional and international peace and security. It deplores the unwillingness of the Afghan warring factions to lay down their arms and cooperate with the United Nations for peace.

"The Security Council stresses that the Afghan conflict has no military solution and that the primary responsibility for finding a peaceful settlement lies with the Afghan parties themselves. It urges all Afghan parties to take genuine confidence-building measures, to agree immediately on a ceasefire, and to engage without preconditions in a political dialogue aimed at achieving national reconciliation, a lasting political settlement of the conflict and the formation of a broad-based, fully representative government that will protect the rights of all Afghans and abide by Afghanistan's international obligations.

"The Security Council deplores the fact that foreign military support to the Afghan parties continued unabated through 1997 and reiterates its call to all States to end immediately the supply of arms, ammunition, military equipment, training or any other military support to all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan, including the involvement of foreign military personnel.

"The Security Council encourages the Secretary-General and Member States to undertake preliminary studies on how an effective arms embargo could be imposed and implemented in a fair and verifiable manner.

"The Security Council insists that the United Nations, as a universally recognized and impartial intermediary, must be given all necessary support so it can continue to play a pivotal, central role in coordinated international efforts, including the efforts of interested countries and organizations, towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. It believes that peace and stability in Afghanistan can best be attained through intra-Afghan political negotiations under United Nations auspices with the active and coordinated assistance of all countries concerned. The Council reiterates its full support for the activities and mandates of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and those of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan.

"The Security Council supports the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at the establishment of a solid international framework in order to address the external aspects of the Afghan question and, in this context, welcomes the convening of meetings of concerned countries as well as those of the immediate neighbours and other countries.

"The Security Council remains deeply concerned at the continuing discrimination against girls and women and other violations of human rights, as well as at violations of international humanitarian law in Afghanistan.

"The Security Council notes with deep concern the reports about mass killings of prisoners of war and civilians in Afghanistan and supports the Secretary-General's intention to continue to investigate fully such reports.

"The Security Council expresses serious concern over the looting of United Nations premises and food supplies and deliberate restrictions placed on the access of humanitarian organizations to some parts of the country and on other humanitarian operations, and urges all parties to prevent their recurrence.

"The Security Council reiterates that the continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan provides a fertile ground for terrorism and illegal drug production and trafficking which destabilize the region and beyond, and calls upon the leaders of the Afghan parties to halt such activities.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to keep it regularly informed about the situation in Afghanistan and his efforts.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1997/55.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.3842

Security Council
Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3842nd Meeting
Thursday, 18 December 1997, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Naranjo Villalobos	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Rosenstock

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/1997/966)

97-86788 (E) 191297

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/1997/966)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Norway, Pakistan, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Fowler (Canada), Mr. Šimonović (Croatia), Mr. Eitel (Germany), Mr. Erdös (Hungary), Mr. Fulci (Italy), Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg), Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia), Mr. Biørn Lian (Norway), Mr. Kamal (Pakistan), Mr. Türk (Slovenia), Mr. Çelem (Turkey) and Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), document S/1997/966.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1997/989, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1997/975, which contains the text of a letter dated 12 December 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting a letter dated 10 December 1997 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General, enclosing the eleventh monthly report on Stabilization Force operations.

Members of the Council have received photocopies of a letter dated 16 December 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Conclusion of the Peace Implementation Conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina, held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/1997/979.

Mr. Somavía (Chile)(*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to express the great satisfaction I feel at seeing you, Mr. Fernando Naranjo Villalobos, presiding over the Security Council on behalf of your country, Costa Rica. Chile being a friend of Costa Rica, it is a great pleasure for me to sit with you at this table.

As we begin the third year of the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, we can see that significant progress has been made. The latest reports of the High Representative, like those of the Secretary-General, provide information about the advances achieved without overlooking the numerous and pressing challenges we still face, primarily in the sphere of the civilian aspects of the Agreement.

Chile is completing a two-year period as an elected member of the Security Council. During this time, we have emphasized the Council's humanitarian responsibilities. We have emphasized the necessity of directing sanctions against political and military leaders, not against innocent people, and of ensuring respect for humanitarian organizations and workers and facilitating their access to this body. We have also stressed the need to respect international humanitarian law and to seek truth and justice when they are violated.

Since the Dayton Peace Agreement, the analysis of the issue in the Council has focused primarily on the

normative plane, as concerns the implementation of the Peace Agreement and its annexes. We have evaluated the application of rules. From that perspective, the focus has been the unity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with its two Entities and its three peoples.

On this occasion, I should like once again to bring to this table a human perspective, a sensitivity to what is happening to people. We would like to focus on another plane: the perspective of the men and women who live behind that collection of rules that we refer to as international agreements — those who are in the end the objects of rules that sometimes seem to them abstract and impersonal.

I should like to focus my statement on the question that is in the minds of many people: what is going to happen in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the day when the troops of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) withdraw? Today there are more than 35,000 such troops. To what extent is the peace process self-sustaining?

How deeply has the Peace Agreement penetrated into the hearts of the men and women of Bosnia and Herzegovina? How deeply rooted is the ideal of reconciliation, which is mentioned in the preamble of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina itself? In short, can there truly be reconciliation if peace depends on an international military presence?

I raise these questions because in the Security Council we are not accustomed to concerning ourselves greatly with the personal dimensions of the reconciliation process. We all know that the peace declared in the documents is not the same thing as peace in people's hearts. We are know that even the most successful implementation of political understandings that bring an end to a conflict does not erase the mistrust, doubts and resentment over atrocities committed during the fighting.

In our judgment, a true peace cannot be based only on a military presence and the mere implementation of political and legal instruments. The emphasis must be on achieving reconciliation, which is a process and the result of an internal transformation. Only the moral force of reconciliation will bring peace to the hearts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Unfortunately, the traditional instruments of diplomacy are inadequate to the task of tackling this problem. That is perhaps why we do not speak very much about this subject in the Security Council. However, I believe that the United Nations as a whole — not just the Security Council — must be capable of helping with specific programmes and projects to stimulate and promote national reconciliation in this type of conflict.

In this regard, civil society and the local authorities may have some lessons to teach national Governments. There have been many experiences in many countries of conflict resolution at the local level between people on a given street, in a given community, in a given workplace, to overcome racial, religious, gender or other kinds of tensions. These experiences are far from the diplomatic sphere, but they may be closer to the real life of the people, in this case of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I should like to take this opportunity to officially request the Secretary-General to place the subject of reconciliation in conflict situations on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination of the United Nations organs, over which he presides. The idea would be to advance an integrated treatment of this subject system-wide and to bring about proposals for actions by the corresponding intergovernmental organs.

In speaking of national reconciliation, we are obliged to call for a significant degree of responsibility on the part of political and military leaders.

When Serbians, Bosnians and Croatians lived peacefully on the same streets, in the same neighbourhoods, in the same cities, what need was there to poison their lives with messages of hatred and confrontation as was done? Naturally there were historical problems, memories of past conflicts, and certainly discrimination in the here and now. No one denies the problems that existed.

But what leader in his right mind can believe that future peace and stability can be based on killing innocent civilians, the use of rape as a tool of war, massive expulsions of people and total disregard for human rights?

We must recognize that it is the leaders who have, to a great extent, brought the peoples of these three countries of the former Yugoslavia into conflict, and these leaders constitute — not always, but very often — an obstacle to reconciliation. One aspect of this, of course, is that we cannot forget those leaders who are responsible for war crimes and whose individual

responsibility cannot be confused with that of the people to which they belong.

It is extremely difficult to hope to see love and mutual understanding in a society that has gone through the fratricidal struggle that Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced. But such change can happen, and it must come from the power of the heart, from men and women who see the fulfilment of the peace process as a search for a higher goal for them as human beings.

Throughout our time in the Security Council, Chile has sought to untangle the ethical dimension present in each conflict as a way of contributing to the conflict's solution. Despite the obstacles, and we realize how great they are, we must have faith that ethical values can bring about important changes. Individuals have the capacity to raise themselves above their society's conditioning factors and to transform the lives of their communities. In individual change and personal action lies the origin of the true transformation of a society.

However, just as genuine forgiveness is necessary to reconciliation, the latter cannot be achieved in a society where justice is not practised. Reconciliation is not and cannot be a synonym for forgetting. I come from a country which, in other circumstances, had to meet the difficult challenge of reconciliation. Today we are beginning in my society to enjoy the fruits of that effort, having travelled a road fraught with difficulties and many tragedies.

The United Nations and the Security Council can do more to encourage those people in Bosnian civil society, in community affairs, in the schools and in the workplaces who have the inner strength to break the bonds of the present and are prepared to assume the costs involved in the search for reconciliation.

We all know that those who dare to forsake the "official culture" always run risks in any society. That is even more difficult, however, in a society in conflict, like that of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Intimidating demagogy is unleashed against them, because those who believe in violence as a source of power deeply fear those who dare to act as sane and sensible human beings, rejecting violence and hatred in their own lives. An example of this are the media — radio, television and newspapers — in which we still see the desire to shape public opinion by discounting one's opponents and perpetuating the spirit of conflict.

I have focused on only one aspect of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina because many of us are convinced that that region is symbolic in the context of this issue and that, if the challenge of national reconciliation is met with success, it will impart very important lessons to other peoples in other situations brought to this Council's attention. We trust that this will prove possible.

I wish to conclude my statement by referring to the ideal of change embodied by one of the greatest figures ever produced by the United Nations: Dag Hammarskjöld, who gave his life for the sake of an ideal of change. It is incumbent on us today to follow his legacy: his faith in political, economic and social change through conviction and the transforming power of the spirit, and not only as an ethical dimension of the way he lived life. As he told us in his extraordinary book *Markings*, in our times the road to sainthood necessarily leads through the world of action.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Chile for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Owada (Japan): Before I address the item before the Security Council this afternoon, permit me to offer my heartfelt welcome and deep respect to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, Mr. Fernando Naranjo Villalobos. In the name of the delegation of Japan, and also as a personal friend of yours, Sir, I wish to say how happy I am to see you preside over us in the chair of the presidency of this Council today.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is about to enter the third year of the implementation of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and the last phase of the consolidation period. During the past two years, the United Nations presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been doing an excellent job in promoting the peace process. I would like especially to stress the significant role played by the International Police Task Force (IPTF). The basic tasks of the IPTF, such as monitoring the activities of the local police forces, restructuring and training them, promoting freedom of movement and investigating human rights abuse cases, are essential to the building of a multiethnic, multicultural and democratic society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation heartily applauds the efforts and dedication of all the unarmed men and women who are serving with the IPTF under very difficult, and quite frequently dangerous, circumstances in post-war Bosnia.

Indeed, the role of the IPTF is a key factor in the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace

Agreement. My delegation therefore fully supports the draft resolution which is currently under consideration by the Security Council and which purports to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the IPTF. In this conjunction, my delegation would like to stress the continued importance of the security arrangements currently provided by the multinational Stabilization Force for the activities of the IPTF.

Taking this opportunity, I should like to mention that the Government of Japan welcomes the announcement made today by President Clinton of the United States that the United States will in principle take part in an international military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina beyond June 1998.

I must emphasize that the United Nations presence is making important contributions in other areas as well, such as human rights monitoring, demining and assisting the smooth conduct of elections. And it is difficult to find words that can adequately express the appreciation we have for the valuable work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in promoting the return of refugees and displaced persons. The Government of Japan fully supports the Open City initiative set out by the UNHCR.

Japan has made significant contributions to the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Within this year alone, Japan has pledged over $190 million in the fields of economic reconstruction, humanitarian and refugee assistance, elections and other peace implementation activities. It also dispatched a substantial number of supervisors and monitors to the municipal elections held under the supervision of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in September this year and has also provided long-term advisers to the High Representative. Japan is doing so in the conviction that genuine peace and reconciliation in Bosnia should certainly be achievable and that the Peace Agreement should provide the only path towards that end.

Regrettably, however, we cannot but recognize that progress in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially in its civilian aspects, has not kept pace with the expectations of the international community. Bosnia and Herzegovina is still without even a common flag, a common symbol, a common currency and a common passport. In this regard, the international community should not tolerate an attempt by any of the parties to dominate the central authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina or to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Japan urges all the parties of Bosnia and Herzegovina to make maximum efforts to fulfil the obligations set out in the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 9 and 10 of this month so that the peace process may be substantially expedited.

Japan is the host country of the Winter Olympic Games in February next year. The Government and people of Japan sincerely hope that a unified Bosnian team, comprising athletes from both entities and representing all the ethnic groups, will come to Nagano under a common flag and a common anthem to receive the wholehearted welcome of the international community. We call upon the parties to make every effort to achieve this goal and to revive the spirit of harmony that prevailed at the Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo in 1984.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Japan for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Costa Rica.

Allow me to express my country's satisfaction upon exercising the presidency of this principal organ of the United Nations. This constitutes and honour and a great responsibility for Costa Rica.

Last 14 December marked the second anniversary of the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Strict compliance with that Agreement has been the essential basis for the reconstruction and pacification of Bosnia. That Agreement is the only possible way to bring about true and just peace for all the inhabitants. The fratricidal war and indiscriminate genocide that afflicted that nation have been overcome thanks to cooperation and the implementation of the Agreement, making it possible to restore peace, separate the combatants and protect innocent civilians from criminal attacks motivated by fanatical nationalism. For this reason, the commemoration of this second anniversary is a propitious time for the Security Council to take stock of the present situation in the light of the implementation process of the peace agreements and to identify those priority areas of the implementation on which the national parties and the international community should focus their attention.

My delegation is pleased to recognize the progress achieved on the road to peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are pleased to see the growing climate of safety, which constitutes an indispensable prerequisite for reconciliation. Likewise, we are gratified at the growing climate of tolerance, democracy, freedom and economic progress, which are indispensable for the country's reconstruction. We would especially like to emphasize the advances made in recent months with regard to national public instruments in connection with currency, travel documents and diplomatic representation, in which the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Carlos Westendorp, has played a decisive role.

Despite these achievements, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina still presents serious problems that must be overcome. The various authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina should show a firm and clear commitment to build up the governmental and administrative structures that are necessary and indispensable to guarantee democracy, respect for human rights, reform of the police force and the return of refugees and displaced persons. In this regard, those authorities should fulfil to the letter the commitments they entered into two years ago.

My delegation attaches the greatest importance to the question of respect for human rights. Mechanisms should be created and implemented to ensure that all persons living in the country enjoy fundamental rights. We are similarly concerned about the tragic situation of refugees and persons displaced by the conflict who are prevented from returning to their homes because neither the authorities of the Federation nor those of the Republika Srpska have taken the necessary legal measures to allow their return.

Likewise, Costa Rica considers that the authorities of the various entities, and in particular those of the Republika Srpska, should make every possible effort to promote tolerance, understanding and reconciliation among the various ethnic, religious and cultural groups living in their territories. In this regard, it is essential that they redouble their efforts to educate the population about the basic principles of tolerance and national reconciliation. My delegation cannot fail to mention the importance of international cooperation aimed at creating an educational programme that will inculcate those principles in the people.

A fundamental aspect of the whole process of pacification and national reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the question of combating impunity. The situation of missing persons and the carrying out of exhumations is a source of concern. The suffering of the relatives of victims because of uncertainty and because of the impunity of criminals should be the subject of the greatest attention. My delegation acknowledges the efforts made in this regard by the Office of the High Representative and the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. Nevertheless, it is a source of deep concern that the parties to the General Framework Agreement and some States are not fulfilling their international obligations to cooperate unconditionally with those bodies. My country believes that they should all cooperate with those international bodies without any restrictions, provide them with complete and immediate information and allow them unrestricted access to those places where there are mass graves in order to conduct the necessary exhumations.

My country also considers that the normalization and reconciliation of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be extremely limited until all war criminals are brought to justice. The authorities of the various entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina should bring suspected criminals on their territories to justice. In particular, they should cooperate with the International Tribunal by arresting indictees, facilitating the compiling of evidence and fully obeying the orders of the Tribunal. Impunity must disappear from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation is pleased about the increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons who have returned to their places of origin; but we are concerned that their general situation has not improved significantly. We call particular attention to the fact that some persons have been relocated against their will to places other than their original homes. In addition, we believe that shortcomings in safety, access to personal documents and guarantees for the return of property are obstacles to the return of those refugees and displaced persons. It is essential that the authorities of the various entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina remove those obstacles.

In this context, and particularly with regard to impunity and the need to deepen the process of judicial and political reform, Costa Rica expresses its agreement with the extension of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is an essential step towards

full reconciliation, and my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

All this leads us to the question that, in our judgement, should be the focus of this debate. We have taken stock of the situation prevailing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and we can underline significant and undeniable advances in the difficult task of consolidating pacification and promoting national reconciliation. At the same time, it is clear to us that there continue to be serious and difficult obstacles. This is naturally the responsibility of the national parties, but it also falls to the international community to continue to play an active and leading role in the task of implementing what has been agreed.

We are satisfied at the recent statements of those countries with links to and interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Political commitment is essential, as is maintaining the levels of participation and international assistance in the difficult task of physical and institutional reconstruction. Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be abandoned to the incarnations of the new international economic reality at this crucial stage. The country must ensure its reconstruction with international support after the end of the conflict. Only in that way will we be able to ensure the true sustainability of the peace agreements and guarantee through them the irreversibility of what has been achieved and the country's successful integration into today's world.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): My delegation welcomes you, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, to our deliberations and is delighted to see you presiding over our meeting today. Kenya and Costa Rica have enjoyed warm and friendly relations over the years, and I am sure that those ties will continue to grow.

My delegation is encouraged by the progress made so far in the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Lack of commitment and political will had initially been a major obstacle to moving the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina forward. Recently, however, we have witnessed more cooperation from the authorities in the region. This has brought about positive developments in various aspects of the peace process.

The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) has played a crucial role in assisting with the municipal elections held on 13 and 14 September 1997 and with the elections for the Republika Srpska Assembly held on 22 and 23 November 1997. The improved cooperation between the United Nations International Police Task Force and the local police has facilitated the implementation of the checkpoint policy since May 1997. Significant progress has been made in the police restructuring programme. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that by August the number of checkpoints approved had dropped from over 300 per day to 15. While welcoming this very positive development, we agree with the Secretary-General that the reduction can only be one element of a broader strategy to promote freedom of movement.

It is estimated that some 609,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina are still in asylum countries, which are seeking a durable solution. There is need to continue focusing on efforts to facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced persons to their places of origin in safety and dignity. The harassment of returning refugees and displaced persons is therefore unacceptable. It is even worse when it is done by police officers who should be protecting the returnees. In this regard, my delegation commends the action taken against the Chief and Deputy Chief of Police of Jajce as reported in paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report.

The presence of mines is still a serious problem. As pointed out in the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Bosnia and Herzegovina, reconstruction projects have been delayed, refugees have been unable to return to their homes, and an average of 50 men, women and children have been injured or killed by these indestructible, hidden weapons monthly. In this regard, my delegation supports the efforts of the Mine Action Centre, the European Commission, Norwegian People's Aid, the United Nations Development Programme and other groups in this very critical area.

More often than not, economic reconstruction forms an integral part of the long-term settlement of disputes. Bosnia and Herzegovina is no exception. Economic development is an integral part of any peace process. In this regard, we commend the efforts of the United Nations system and the World Bank in trying to bring about progress in the major sectors of the economy. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, a lot has been achieved, but much also remains to be done. The support of the international community is therefore necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to consolidate the progress made so far.

My delegation welcomes the conclusions of the ministerial meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, held at Sintra, Portugal, on 30 May 1997, and of the Peace Implementation Conference held at Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997. It is our hope that their recommendations will be taken seriously by the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so as to expedite a political settlement of the crisis.

The presence of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been instrumental in achieving the progress we are witnessing today. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, this progress is in its early stages and is still fragile. In this regard, my delegation supports the extension of the mandate of the UNMIBH for a further six months.

My delegation would like to pay tribute to Mr. Kai Eide for his effective leadership during his tenure as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the appointment of Elizabeth Rehn as his successor. We assure her of Kenya's support as she continues with this important task. We also affirm our full support for the High Representative and his staff as he facilitates the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Kenya for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes you, Sir, as you preside over today's meeting of the Security Council to conduct an open debate on the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Over the past year the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has, on the whole, been stable, and the peace process has been proceeding smoothly. That is a concrete manifestation of the political will and cooperative attitude of the parties concerned in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we welcome it. Because peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been hard-won, it should be doubly cherished and nurtured.

We believe that national reconciliation is the key to a genuine, lasting settlement of the problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has laid down a basic framework of that purpose, and the parties concerned should implement the Peace Agreement in earnest.

Maintaining stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the fundamental interest of the ethnic communities of that country, and is conducive to peace and stability in the region. We hope that the parties concerned will take account of the fundamental interests of the people, and that they will set aside their grudges, restore mutual trust, achieve national reconciliation and join in working to achieve development. In that connection, the parties concerned should continue their efforts to resolve outstanding issues to bring about the full functioning of common institutions.

There can be no talk of development without peace and stability, and peace and stability can be better maintained when there is development. At present, Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the phase of consolidating peace. Post-conflict economic reconstruction is a formidable task, and we appeal to the generosity of the international community to assist the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to heal their war wounds and to rebuild their homes.

We support the diplomatic and political efforts of the international community in behalf of the peace process for Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also support the work of the United Nations carried out, in its civilian aspects, in accordance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement. We believe that the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) should principally carry out tasks mandated by the Peace Agreement.

Issues relating to judicial reform and economic matters involve sensitive and complex questions, and involve high stakes. The United Nations should therefore proceed with caution in this respect.

We note that the countries contributing troops to the Stabilization Force are reviewing its future mandate. On the basis of past experience, operations authorized or approved by the Security Council have always been adjusted in response to changes in circumstances. In view of the fact that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be stable, we hope that the countries contributing troops to the Stabilization Force will report to the Security Council in timely fashion on their thoughts about the future. We would also like to point out that the task of the Stabilization Force, as its name implies, is to maintain stability. We hope that any action

taken by the Stabilization Force will be conducive to continued stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

China has always supported the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we have no self-serving designs in that country. We sincerely hope that countries in the former Yugoslavia, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, can live in harmony. We also hope fervently that, with the common efforts of the parties concerned, Bosnia and Herzegovina can enjoy lasting peace and prosperity.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): I take sincere pleasure in taking part in this meeting of the Security Council under the presidency of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, with which Russia has long had friendly relations that were further developed during a recent visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation to your wonderful country, Mr. President.

A few days ago, it was the second anniversary of the Security Council's decision to lay the foundation for the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. Looking back and evaluating how far we have come, we note with satisfaction that although there have been some difficulties, the peace process is being implemented.

On the whole, the way the implementation of the Dayton/Paris Agreement has gone can be regarded as positive. Undoubtedly, the continued peace and the establishment of the basis for a unified State are major achievements. We have been able to move ahead in the process of forming pan-Bosnian institutions, and refugees continue to return gradually. Thanks to international assistance, some progress has been made in the economic sphere.

The Bosnian sides, as a whole, are abiding by the commitments they made in the military sphere, have carried out plans for arms reduction and are implementing confidence-building measures. In a word, as was again acknowledged at the recent Bonn Conference of the Peace Implementation Council, there is now no alternative to Dayton.

At the same time, it should be recognized that the pace of implementation of the Peace Agreement does not correspond to the level of international support given. The peace process is not yet irreversible. We see a lack of political will to ensure reconciliation and we have not overcome stereotypical thinking based on confrontation and attempts to secure advantages for one side.

To a great extent, negative trends have been kept in check by the presence of multinational forces that make it possible to stabilize the situation and intensify efforts in civilian areas of implementation.

In this connection, we once again reaffirm our resolute rejection of attempts at an arbitrary, unilateral interpretation of the mandate of existing international structures, which is leading to a build-up of elements of military force in the arsenal of peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Russia is seriously concerned at the fact that such recidivism is continuing.

Yesterday, near the town of Vitez, sub-units of the Stabilization Force carried out a pre-planned operation to forcibly detain individuals indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. They thereby went beyond the mandate of the Stabilization Force approved by the Security Council, which ruled out such acts of force targeted at individuals.

Russia is surprised and concerned that the High Representative, Ambassador Westendorp, who is ultimately responsible for respect for the civilian aspects of the Agreement, was informed of this arrest only after the fact.

Russia frowns on any unilateral actions that might threaten the lives of the peacekeepers or jeopardize the entire process of a Bosnian settlement, and we do not intend to take responsibility for this. Justice must triumph, but only by legitimate means.

Russia is taking an active part in international efforts to stabilize the situation and in the activities of other international structures in Bosnia, in strict compliance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement and Security Council decisions. We believe that the bulk of the responsibility for the success of the peace process lies with the Bosnians themselves and the authorities they have elected.

At the same time, the situation as it stands requires the continued cooperation of the international community with the Bosnian parties. The United Nations is making a real contribution to the Bosnian settlement. We value

highly the concrete work of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) in helping ensure freedom of movement, in supervising the safe return of refugees and displaced persons, in creating safe conditions in which elections can be held and in trying to reform law enforcement bodies in Bosnia. The United Nations Mission is actively involved in confidence-building on the ground and in coordinating the efforts of other United Nations specialized agencies. An important role is being played by the United Nations Mine Action Centre. We support the further continuation of the activities of the United Nations Mission and of the IPTF in the framework of the current mandate, worked out with the agreement of the Bosnian sides, which is a combination of the relevant provisions of the Peace Agreement and the decisions of international structures on a Bosnian settlement, including the decisions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference.

This approach is reflected in the draft resolution, of which Russia is one of the sponsors.

The Russian Federation, as an active participant in the Bosnian settlement, is firmly convinced that at this current crucial stage of the peace process, all international institutions involved are required, as never before, to monitor closely the situation neutrally and dispassionately and to comply strictly with the spirit and the letter of the Dayton/Paris Agreement. In this way, the successful implementation of a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bosnia's emergence as a unified, democratic, multi-ethnic and prosperous State can be guaranteed.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for the kind words he addressed to me, and particularly for mentioning the very welcome visit to Costa Rica of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Primakov, some days ago.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Portugal and Costa Rica are both part of the Ibero-American family, and our two countries have been taking advantage of our presence in the Security Council to step up our cooperation. For this reason, it is with great pleasure that I see Mr. Fernando Naranjo Villalobos presiding over this meeting of the Security Council.

(*spoke in English*)

Considerable progress has been made in implementing peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The holding of municipal elections in September and the maintenance of an environment of security culminated a year of combined efforts by the international community to help the Bosnian people establish a long-lasting peace.

But, while there has been progress, much still remains to be done.

The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and the International Police Task Force (IPTF) play a crucial role in the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is clear that their tasks have been carried out effectively over the course of this last year.

It is a difficult mission and a complex one, which also requires essential input from other international actors, in particular the Stabilization Force (SFOR) led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which provides the security environment necessary for the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

In the final analysis, however, the international community's efforts in Bosnia will not amount to very much if the Bosnian parties themselves are not fully committed to peace and to cooperating fully with the United Nations, SFOR, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations, as well as with each other.

This is the only way to establish a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia. We urge the parties to make increased efforts to address inadequate progress, including in the following areas: the functioning of common institutions, the protection of human rights, the return of refugees, economic management and cooperation with the International Tribunal. Furthermore, the implementation of the results of the municipal elections must be completed, and serious problems of local administration must be addressed.

We welcome the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference, which built on the work of previous Peace Implementation Council meetings held in London and Sintra, in setting out very clearly what still needs to be done by the Bosnian parties. Taken with the Peace Agreement, they represent the blueprint for peace in Bosnia. And, as the Peace Implementation Council confirmed in Bonn, there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement. Therefore, the mandate of UNMIBH, and thus of the IPTF, should be extended so that it can continue its important work in the areas of police reform,

as well as the other tasks entrusted to it and to the civilian unit of UNMIBH.

Without an adequate security arrangement, however, the work of the United Nations and others in the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement will be compromised. This security arrangement is currently provided by SFOR. But an adequate security arrangement must be established after the end of SFOR's mandate in order to ensure the continuity of the international community's efforts in Bosnia.

Portugal has over 60 personnel serving with the IPTF and over 300 serving with SFOR. We believe very strongly in the need for adequate security.

The United Nations, in supporting the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement, also cooperates with the OSCE and with the High Representative. Their work, and that of others, is crucial to the process of consolidating peace in Bosnia. We pay tribute to the High Representative, Mr. Carlos Westendorp, as well as to United Nations and other international personnel who are working hard to help bring lasting peace to Bosnia, often in dangerous, if not fatal, circumstances. Portugal regrets the loss of life in the helicopter crash of 17 September 1997.

The efforts of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been significant, and we must not forget that, not too long ago, there was open fighting in Bosnia, and civilian populations were subjected to daily bombardments.

The time for the withdrawal of the international community has not yet come. For now, the international community must remain in Bosnia and Herzegovina to help consolidate peace. This will permit the intensification of the process of economic reconstruction and development. It is, above all, essential to ensure the true reconciliation of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the rule of law will replace the rule of war.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Portugal for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Matuszewski (Poland): Let me begin by saying how pleased my delegation is to see you, Sir, presiding over today's meeting of the Security Council.

In the light of Poland's alignment with a statement to be made by the Ambassador of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, my statement is intended to highlight some points which are of particular significance for my country.

Poland, like other members of the international community, attaches great importance to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the signing of the Peace Agreement, this friendly country has embarked upon a difficult journey towards peace and stability based on the harmonious coexistence of all component parts of its multi-ethnic society. The very future of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent country and the prospects for sustainable peace in the whole region hinge on how smooth and fast this journey is.

The progress that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made since the conclusion of the conference in Dayton, Ohio, is significant. It constitutes yet further evidence of the political far-sightedness of the architects of this complex and unique construction known as the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, indeed, does credit to the international community's multidimensional support for a peaceful and prosperous Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Having participated in the Peace Implementation Conference held recently in Bonn, Poland fully identifies itself with the Conference's assessments and conclusions. We join other members in appealing to the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to fulfil what they have repeatedly declared themselves to be committed to: to make peace in their country and to make its entities self-sustainable. To achieve this, further progress is necessary in building functioning governmental structures, to advance the process of democratization, to institute adequate protection of human rights, to reform the law enforcement institutions and the judiciary system, to create necessary conditions for the successful completion of the return of refugees and displaced persons and to cure the economy of its many diseases.

Let me focus on two issues which are, in the view of my delegation, of particular importance for the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, as a matter of fact, for the future of the whole region. The first is the problem of interested countries' cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. We regret to have to note that there are still those who seem to take lightly their obligations under the terms of the Peace Agreement and the relevant resolutions of the Security

Council. In our view, progress in the administration of justice is essential for the prospects of national reconciliation, peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the whole region. We join others in calling upon the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure that those indicted are tried as stipulated in the decisions of the Security Council.

The second issue that I would like to briefly touch upon is the return of the refugees and displaced persons. By the number of those who have decided to return to their original domiciles one may, in fact, measure quite accurately the progress made in any other part of the process of the normalization of the country's political, social and economic life. We understand very well the complexity of this whole problem, but at the same time we believe that more efforts will have to be made, and they should be better focused in order to achieve a genuine breakthrough in this area.

My delegation is of the opinion that the International Police Task Force (IPTF) has played an extremely important role in creating conditions conducive to a secure and durable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the progress made in other aspects of IPTF activities, including assistance in restructuring and training the local police, as well as in promoting model democratic standards among the country's police force. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his latest report, however, much remains to be done, and the further IPTF presence is in our view indispensable. It is important, however, that IPTF monitors continue to be covered by adequate security arrangements, which at present can be secured only by a credible international military force.

The magnitude of the task in Bosnia and Herzegovina warrants a great deal of organization and coordination on the part of the international actors present in the country. We believe that their achievements deserve our deep appreciation. Today's debate and the beginning of a new phase of the implementation of the Peace Agreement coincide with the final preparations for Poland's assuming the post of Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for the year 1998. We stand ready to cooperate with all our partners in order to assist the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in building a peaceful, prosperous and stable country.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Poland for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): Mr. President, let me start by saying that it is an honour for me to participate in this debate under your distinguished presidency.

Expectations were high when the Dayton Peace Agreement was reached two years ago. Here and there, they might have been too high, which has caused frustration and impatience in many quarters. Against this background, it is important not to lose sight of what has actually been achieved.

After the success of military implementation, we have witnessed the establishment of a collective presidency and a Council of Ministers. We have seen increased freedom of movement, economic revival in certain areas and progress in the field of arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. The media situation has improved. Three major elections have been held — parliamentary in September 1996, local elections in September 1997 and, most recently, special elections in the Republika Srpska. In phases, the election processes have increased the possibilities of advancing the civilian implementation of the peace accords. Of particular importance is also the recent increase in the number of indictees held in custody by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Although far from sufficient, recent developments have at least opened the perspective of a viable future for hundreds of thousands of individuals, and paved the way for further progress. In Bosnia and Herzegovina today, islands of normality do exist, both in political and civic life.

This progress is mainly due to the improved coordination of the international community's efforts, with guidance from the High Representative, the Contact Group, the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As regards the United Nations Mission, I want to pay a special tribute to Mr. Kai Eide, under whose skilful leadership the Mission has effectively carried out its mandate. I would particularly like to highlight its successful programmes for reform and restructuring of the local police, both in the Federation and more recently in Republika Srpska. The close cooperation and efficient distribution of responsibilities between the International Police Task Force (IPTF) and the Stabilization Force (SFOR) should also be mentioned. By extending the mandate of the United Nations Mission, including the

IPTF, the Security Council will send a clear signal of its continued commitment to peace implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When looking at the progress in peace implementation, due respect should also be given, of course, to the thousands of initiatives and decisions taken by individuals and non-governmental organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Together, they have demonstrated that there does indeed still exist a Bosnian identity, transcending ethnic lines.

Unfortunately, the contribution to the process by the leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina has so far not been convincing. It is disappointing that many of the key issues are still unresolved, mainly because the political leaders stick to old nationalistic approaches.

From the very outset of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Sweden has stressed the importance of having a long-term perspective of its implementation. After so many months of suffering and destruction, it does take time to rebuild confidence and acceptance among ethnic groups to live together again.

Although that long-term perspective cannot at all times be expressed in binding resolutions, Sweden is satisfied that, in practice, the international community increasingly acts with this perspective in mind. The determination that was expressed through the Bonn declaration last week is a clear indication of this. Among the tasks ahead is to ensure that the elections in September 1998 will be free and fair. The issues of freedom of movement and functioning nationwide communications have to be moved forward. In this connection, continued demining activities and removal of illegal checkpoints are of major importance.

Like the High Representative, Sweden believes that efforts in 1998 should be focused on free media and on a democratically controlled police. It is also essential to enable refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes, including those in so-called minority areas. The success of refugee return during 1998 will be crucial for the whole reconciliation process. Of particular importance is the call, at Bonn, for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to introduce a regional approach for refugee return, covering Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as well. In this context, we noted with satisfaction the declaration in Geneva yesterday by the representative of the Republika Srpska that

> "all spontaneous minority returns from asylum countries as well as from the Federation are supported".

I am convinced that when this is put into practice it will trigger similar movements elsewhere in the region.

The setting up of functioning common institutions as well as the adoption and implementation of key pieces of legislation are already overdue. These matters need to be addressed fully and without further delay.

Last, but certainly not least, the indicted war criminals have to be brought to the Tribunal in The Hague. It is increasingly disturbing that some of them are allowed to continue to exercise decisive control over political life in Pale.

The time has not yet come to relax the international involvement in securing the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My country is committed to continuing its full support for the peace process in Bosnia and in the region at large. We remain convinced, however, that the success of all our efforts in the civilian implementation, including through the IPTF, is contingent upon the continued existence of a credible international military force in Bosnia. Sweden is prepared to continue to contribute to such a force after SFOR, provided that it is still United Nations-mandated, led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and with United States participation on the ground. In this context, we warmly welcome the statement made today by the President of the United States, Mr. William Clinton.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Sweden for the kind words he addressed to me.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): First of all, let me join others in extending to you personally, Mr. President, a welcome here this afternoon.

Before beginning my prepared statement I should like on behalf of the British Government to welcome the latest action by the Stabilization Force (SFOR), acting under authority contained in the relevant Security Council resolutions, to detain two Bosnian Croats indicted for war crimes. We congratulate SFOR troops on a brave and successful operation. Other war crimes indictees still at large are hereby put on notice that they too remain accountable. They should surrender themselves to the International Criminal Tribunal without delay. And all the

parties to the Peace Agreement should comply fully with their commitment to transfer those indicted for war crimes to The Hague. Justice is indispensable for true peace and reconciliation in Bosnia. Last night's action by SFOR underscores this.

The Bonn Peace Implementation Council set an accelerated agenda for civilian implementation for next year. It reaffirmed that the only way forward is a unified State of Bosnia and Herzegovina with two multi-ethnic entities, sovereign and secure within its existing borders.

The United Kingdom is determined to put its whole weight behind the peace process. We strongly support the High Representative's intention to use his full authority under Dayton to drive implementation forward. Bonn reaffirmed the full backing of the international community for his efforts.

Our goal, like that of all the international community, is a democratic and prosperous Bosnia taking its place as a modern nation in Europe. The international community is putting enormous effort into this, and members of the United Nations and other international organizations engaged in Bosnia, especially Carlos Westendorp and Kai Eide and their teams, deserve our praise and support for their considerable achievements in the two years since Dayton. The tragic loss of 12 international personnel in a helicopter crash in Bosnia on 17 September bears witness to the courage and commitment of those who are trying to bring peace to this troubled country.

We have kept our side of the bargain. It is now time for Bosnia's leaders to deliver theirs. The Bonn Peace Implementation Conference made this very clear. We expect action from the Bosnian authorities on media freedoms. We expect action to allow refugees and displaced persons to return home and for property laws to be changed so that they are fair. We expect progress on consolidating the central institutions and on introducing good government practices, particularly in the area of transparency in public accounts. We hope that the new Republika Srpska Assembly and Government will meet soon and emphasize that all political institutions throughout Bosnia will be held to internationally accepted standards of democratization and accountability.

And, as I said a moment ago, we expect action from the authorities in Bosnia and its neighbours to surrender those indicted for war crimes to the International Tribunal in The Hague, as they have committed themselves to do.

We also expect the deadlines set at Bonn to be followed. We regret that the parties fell at the first fence by failing to adopt the citizenship law. We welcome the move by the High Representative to have the law applied on an interim basis until passed by the parliamentary Assembly.

The United Kingdom has welcomed the readiness this year to use SFOR directly to support civilian implementation. Continued success in this area will depend on maintaining a secure environment. Following the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on 16 December, NATO is now examining possible options for a follow-on force to succeed SFOR when the latter's mandate expires in June of next year.

British troops have been on the ground in Bosnia since the beginning of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and remain the largest European contingent. British Ministers have made it clear that they are ready to stay for the foreseeable future if others are.

We warmly welcome therefore President Clinton's commitment in principle to contribute United States troops and United States command to a follow-on force. This will help to ensure the success of a post-SFOR mission and to consolidate SFOR's considerable achievements in advancing civilian implementation. We look forward to the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF). The commitment and professionalism of the IPTF's members is a major force for change in Bosnia. The United Kingdom is a firm supporter of the strengthened role envisaged for them at Bonn, notably in training the Entity police forces so that these can serve their communities in a professional and non-discriminatory way in maintaining the rule of law. The United Kingdom is delighted that a British Deputy Chief Constable, Mr. Richard Monk, has been appointed as the new IPTF Commissioner. We shall give him every support in his important task.

We believe that the extension of the IPTF mandate for six months — on a renewable basis to bring it in line with SFOR's mandate — is strategically coherent while offering the best way of meeting operational requirements. We hope that this extension will be agreed without difficulty.

We all want to see Bosnia regain normality. No one expects it is going to be rebuilt in a day, and the United

Kingdom is prepared to stay the course if others do. We have invested over £1 billion so far financially and militarily. I said at the beginning of my remarks that our goal was to see Bosnia participate fully in Europe. But that and the lasting peace which would underpin such a role is not in the international community's gift, however hard we work in Bosnia. Ultimately, it is the action of Bosnia's leaders that will determine how Bosnia meets the twenty-first century. They are accountable to history, to the international community and to their own people.

Mr. Dejammet (France) *(interpretation from French)*: Allow me to say how honoured we are today to be holding our proceedings under the presidency of the Foreign Minister of a country that has become a symbol of the quest for peaceful settlement of disputes and implementation of the rule of law.

We are entering the third year of the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and are also at the mid-point of the period of consolidation.

The consolidation plan adopted last year for a two-year period rested on a new rationale — that of a conditional, contractual approach to the peace process. That approach can be summed up easily: there is no credible alternative to the Peace Agreement, and the responsibility for implementing it falls primarily to the elected authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A simple comparison with the situation that prevailed only two years ago in Bosnia and Herzegovina fortunately enables us to see that there has been progress. The military side of the Peace Agreement has been largely completed. A considerable effort of reconstruction has been undertaken in the country, and for this we must congratulate the authorities.

The European Union is honoured to be far and away the largest contributor of aid towards the restoration of the economic structures of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it is to be recalled that continued international assistance is linked to respect by the parties for the obligations in the Agreement. That conditionality must be perceived in a positive light: those who cooperate in good faith in the implementation of the Agreement, whether at the central, local or municipal level, can be assured of our support.

This huge effort, however, cannot lead to a lasting restoration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina unless necessary reforms are undertaken and the central institutions are able to function in a more satisfactory manner. Respect for the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and implementation of the physical and political conditions needed for the operation of those institutions at all levels are priorities.

Beyond these difficulties that relate to the functioning of central institutions, progress still needs to be made in many areas — strengthening of democratization, developing of pluralistic media, reform of the police and the judiciary and in the struggle against corruption. France underscores also the importance of improving the situation with regard to respect for human rights and the return of refugees and displaced persons. To date, of more than 2 million refugees, fewer than 200,000 have been able to go home.

France unequivocally urges that all indicted persons be handed over to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. There again, the primary responsibility for handing over the war criminals being sought falls to the parties. France, which was involved in the creation of the Tribunal from the beginning, France, whose army paid a heavy price in the service of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina — 70 dead, 700 wounded — was deeply shocked by recent statements in the press questioning the conduct of States participating in the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in the implementation of the Tribunal's decisions. As recently confirmed by the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), all of the allies and the countries participating in the Stabilization Force, indeed, share the same resolve to ensure that indicted war criminals are brought to justice. The arrest in central Bosnia of two indicted persons, which has just taken place, is an example. This is a joint effort under a single chain of command and in accordance with identical rules of engagement. The policy followed in this domain is decided by the NATO Council. The French officers present in Bosnia and Herzegovina today, like others, follow those directives set jointly by the allies and strictly apply the rules of engagement laid down by NATO for the apprehension of persons sought by the Tribunal.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina calls for additional efforts by all, especially by the parties. Only one year remains before the completion of the consolidation plan and only a few months before the holding of the next general election. Thus, this is an urgent matter. The Peace Implementation Conference that has just taken place in Bonn clearly indicated the path to be followed.

The High Representative charged with the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreements will continue to play a central role in coordination in this respect. The tireless efforts of Mr. Carl Bildt and those today of Mr. Carlos Westendorp have greatly contributed to the successes achieved in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the end of hostilities. The High Representative may rely in this regard on the constant support of my Government.

The United Nations is also making an important contribution to stabilizing the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region through the work of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, in particular, of the International Police Task Force. France in that regard thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Eide, for his efforts in support of the peace process, and we today assure Ms. Elisabeth Rehn, who is to succeed him, of our full support.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of France for his very kind words about my country.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me great pleasure to preface my statement by welcoming your Excellency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, as President of this Council. Costa Rica is a State that has constantly made constructive contributions in support of the edifice of world peace.

The Security Council meets today to discuss and evaluate the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the framework of the Council's discharge of its primary responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. This responsibility extends to include following up on the implementation of all peace agreements in all conflict areas with a view to ensuring that no setbacks occur in such areas and also to monitor the effective and balanced implementation of the provisions of these agreements in order to ensure the interests of all concerned parties in achieving security, stability and peace.

Our general debate today assumes a special importance in view of the fact that it is being held in positive circumstances of attaining many achievements in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Foremost among these are probably the presidential elections, followed by the municipal elections and other elections of legislative bodies. All these are indications that the implementation of the Dayton Agreement is proceeding in the right direction in some fields.

However, a thorough analysis of the balance of the implementation of the provisions of the Peace Agreement makes it clear that, despite the progress made, that implementation, in some fields, continues to be lagging to a degree which causes concern, indeed fear, that the entire Peace Agreement might collapse.

It is noteworthy that the progress made recently in implementation of the Agreement is closely linked to the efforts made to deal with and settle the question of war crimes. Despite the difficulty of dealing with this problem, the fact that the Stabilization Force (SFOR) on 10 July 1997 did apprehend one of the indicted war criminals, and the fact that yesterday evening it also apprehended two Croatian war criminals, has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that SFOR is indeed capable of dealing with this question. This is particularly so because out of a total of 78 indictees, only 20 have been apprehended: 14 Croats, three Bosnians and three Serbs. Only two of them have been tried and sentenced. Five more are currently being tried in two different cases. It is also noteworthy here that the Bosnians were the only party that extradited all the indictees under their jurisdiction — all three of them — and that Croatia has displayed a great deal of good faith. The Republika Srpska is the only party that, until now, refuses to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal. Out of 57 Serbian indictees, only three have been apprehended, which means that a good number continues to be at large.

A thorough analysis of the statistics I have just mentioned and of the fact that major suspects, including Karadzic and Mladic, continue to be at large and even continue to exert a great deal of political influence, leads us to state that the peace process in Bosnia will not continuously progress without the apprehension of those indictees, and that the reconciliation process will not succeed without their being tried.

The Security Council bears a historic responsibility at this important juncture to mandate SFOR and the force to succeed it in the future to pursue the war criminals and bring them to trial. The Council also has the additional responsibility of providing the Tribunal with the necessary financial support in order to enable it to discharge its tasks with the requisite dispatch and efficiency.

The constitutional crisis that took place in the Republika Srpska caused the international community grave concern. It has proved that the lack of supervision of the implementation of the Peace Agreement and leaving the war criminals at large could lead to more separation rather than unification. The de facto division of that Entity into two parts, one administered from Pale and the other from Banja Luka, is concrete evidence of the results of such a situation, particularly in view of the clear struggle for power to which some war criminals are parties.

In spite all this, the parliamentary election held last November brought a glimmer of hope. It is our hope that it will lead to a rectification of the situation. However, this cannot come about without the full implementation of the results of the elections and in a manner that permits the reunification of that entity. In this regard, the international community must pursue an approach that links economic aid on the one hand and the achievement of the desired political objectives on the other, especially in Republika Srpska.

The implementation of Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement concerning the voluntary, free and safe return of refugees and displaced persons, particularly in minority areas, has become a disappointing and discouraging process. This process makes it clear that the excessive attention accorded to the political aspects of the Dayton Agreement at the expense of the humanitarian and ethnic aspects carries with it an inherent danger that threatens peace entirely in Bosnia.

Of a total of more than 2 million displaced persons at the end of the hostilities, only 381,000 — 171,000 refugees and 210,000 displaced persons — have returned to their homes. Until now, there has not been an opportunity for the rest of the refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes.

Despite the relative success of the open cities plan launched by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a plan that contributes to the delivery of economic aid to the refugees and the internally displaced persons at their current places of residence, and despite the comprehensive plan adopted by the international community for the return of large numbers of refugees, the political obstacles impeding the implementation of these plans remains great. Therefore, the need has become urgent to take decisive measures, the most important of which is the recision of the ethnically based property laws throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and the organization of a swift return of refugees and displaced persons to their original homes, and not — I emphasize "not" — to any other place that they might be compelled to go to.

Human rights, freedom of movement and freedom of the press throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina — which have assumed increasing importance with the passage of time — must be fully respected and guaranteed.

I turn now to the implementation of the military and regional stability provisions of the Dayton Agreement. The date set for the implementation of the second phase of arms reduction under the Agreement on Subregional Arms Control was 31 October 1997. However, Republika Srpska continues to refuse to make the deep cuts necessary to comply with the provisions of that Agreement, casting doubt on its military intentions, especially in view of the fact that the Federation's military capabilities remain far below the maximum established by the Agreement. In this regard, the fears and concerns expressed by Republika Srpska vis-à-vis the equipment and training programme are unjustified if it has the political will to reconcile and avoid military confrontations.

The Security Council therefore bears a special responsibility for the implementation of this part of the Dayton Agreement, not only to prevent the eruption of conflict in this region in the future, but also within the context of exercising its Charter responsibility for the regulation of armaments.

As concerns the formation of the common institutions, Egypt has closely followed the results of the various meetings of the Peace Implementation Council, the most recent of which was in Bonn on 9 and 10 of this month. We would reiterate once again that the triumph of the forces of reunification will depend to a great extent on the creation of the common institutions. It is not logical, for instance, to speak of reunification at a time when there are no direct telephone contacts between the Federation and Republika Srpska; when there is no common currency; when laws of citizenship have yet to be enacted; when there is no economic capacity to create these institutions; and in an environment that does not provide the necessary freedom of movement.

In this framework, the efforts for reconstruction and economic development must be given high priority within the struggle to reunite Bosnia, in the context not only of implementing the Dayton Agrement, but also of the international community's unrelenting efforts to help Bosnia. The donors honoured their pledge of $1.8 billion

in 1996; they have also pledged $1.24 billion for 1997. And yet, Republika Srpska's refusal to attend the annual donors' conference and to respond to the efforts for integration and unification raises serious questions about the intentions of this entity at this complex stage of the implementation of the Dayton Agreement.

What is currently impeding the reconstruction and development of Bosnia and Herzegovina are considerations of political control over the economy, as well as the lack of a minimum degree of transparency on economic questions. This is undoubtedly the result of the lack of trust among the various parties. The reconstruction efforts must therefore be linked to the responsiveness of the parties to the political efforts being made. This year's General Assembly resolution on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has sent the correct message by linking economic assistance to the responsiveness of the parties to efforts to achieve a political settlement. It is our hope that this will lead to improved responsiveness to those political efforts.

I have set out Egypt's view of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is shared by all the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina. We deem it extremely important that the role of the Security Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina not be confined to the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite its valiant efforts contributing to the stabilization of the situation, or to the efforts of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) to restructure the local police. All these efforts are clearly reflected in the report before the Council today. We feel that it is imperative that the Security Council set a number of guidelines to address the aforementioned problems in coordination with the Peace Implementation Council in Bosnia. We also deem it important that the Security Council assign a larger role to the Stabilization Force and the force to succeed it in June next year, in order to impose the will of the international community and of the people of Bosnia to create a unified, multiethnic State whose people live together under one roof, enjoying independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized boundaries.

In conclusion, I wish to pay tributes to the efforts made by the High Representative for Bosnia, Mr. Carlos Westendorp, especially in the current circumstances in which he is assuming his tasks. I also wish to commend the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Bosnia; the Commander of the IPTF; the leaders of SFOR; and all the men and women working in trying circumstances to bolster peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Egypt for his kind words addressed to my country.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): I wish to join previous speakers in welcoming you, Sir, to New York to preside over this important meeting. We pay tribute to you for the consistent efforts your country has been making in the interests of peace.

Looking back over the progress that has been made in the two years since the conclusion of the Dayton Peace Agreement, we can see that, indeed, much has been achieved. Bosnia and Herzegovina is today a very different place than it was in 1995, with far greater stability, far less violence, and the promise of a brighter future. These positive developments are due in large part to the coordinated involvement of a host of international players operating in the region, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the High Representative and his staff, the courageous men and women of the Stabilization Force, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations specialized agencies and a range of non-governmental organizations. The Republic of Korea greatly appreciates all their dedicated efforts to advance peace and stability in the war-ravaged country and pays high tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in that noble process.

In assessing the overall situation, my delegation recalls the High Representative's report in April of this year, which outlined three courses of action in Bosnia to be avoided or prevented: first, the military option; secondly, the option of secession; and thirdly, the option of domination by one ethnic group.

It is encouraging to note that the military option is now neither feasible nor realistic, and that no ethnic group considers it a serious or attractive alternative at this stage. However, there is a risk that some party may once again come to favour this option if the commitment of the international community to peace in Bosnia wanes or is withdrawn entirely.

The option of overt secession, we are pleased to note, also appears to have lost its appeal for all involved. A danger persists, however, of slow creeping secession and we need to continue our vigilance in this regard.

As regards potential dominance by a single ethnic group, we are also pleased to see that common institutions comprising all three major ethnic groups are now in place in Bosnia and that the danger of dominance by one over another has receded. Nonetheless, the current operation of those common institutions reveals that smooth cooperation and coordination among the leaders of the three groups has yet to take shape.

Having said that, the Republic of Korea reiterates its conviction that the implementation of the Peace Agreement is the only way to attain a comprehensive solution. Under the direction of the Peace Agreement and the guiding principles and conclusions of the Peace Implementation Council's successive meetings, multi-ethnic political and social structures need to be created and economic rehabilitation fostered.

In this context, we wish to highlight six areas in which we believe further and more focused action is clearly warranted.

First, urgent action must be undertaken by the concerned parties to ensure that refugees and displaced persons can safely return to their homes, including to those areas in which they are the minority, and that their property rights are sufficiently protected.

Secondly, all parties must redouble their efforts to cooperate with the International Tribunal with a view to strengthening a sense of justice and the rule of law in their homeland. Peace in Bosnia cannot endure if it is not a just peace. For the sake of the victims in the region, and because of the terrible precedent it would set, war criminals must not be allowed to go unpunished.

Thirdly, full respect for human rights, irrespective of ethnicity, by all parties concerned is an essential prerequisite for the creation of a multi-ethnic, democratic Bosnian State.

Fourthly, common institutions in the central Government must function effectively in order to reintegrate Bosnian society and reconcile people of all ethnicities. The leaders of the respective ethnic groups need to show greater flexibility in taking step-by-step action to that end. At the same time, the results of municipal elections held in September of this year must be fully implemented without delay.

Fifthly, international economic assistance should continue to be linked to the degree of compliance by the various authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the obligations and conditions set out in the Peace Agreement and subsequent relevant international meetings. Economic reconstruction and the political democratic process must go hand in hand.

And, sixthly, it is essential that local police restructuring, which was so capably undertaken by the International Police Task Force (IPTF), be further pursued and that this crucial process be combined with comprehensive judicial reform. The IPTF's recent initiatives aimed at tackling financial crime and corruption also deserve the support of the international community.

Finally, we believe that, building upon the significant progress that has been achieved thus far, the United Nations and the international community can and should do a good deal more to bring about durable peace and stability, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but throughout the Balkan region. The continuation of a credible international military presence there will be pivotal towards that end. Let us hope that the substantial time and energy we have invested will produce further dividends of peace for its war-weary people.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation would like to thank you, Sir, for being so kind as to preside over this open meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Your presence among us bears witness to the important contribution of your country, Costa Rica, to international affairs. I would like, with your permission, to take this opportunity to underscore the important role of the delegation of Costa Rica in the Security Council and to say how much we have appreciated being able to cooperate with it under the skilful and diligent guidance of Ambassador Fernando Berrocal Soto.

As we approach the Christmas holiday, which is the best time for each and every one of us to renew or consolidate family ties, I would like, on behalf of my delegation, to express our affection for the families of the 12 men and women of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) and the Office of the High Representative who lost their lives in the tragic helicopter accident last

17 September. I wish to extend the heartfelt condolences of my delegation to all those families in their suffering.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has the sad distinction of having numerous conferences and debates focused on its tragic destiny — among them those of the Security Council — aimed at finding a fair and peaceful settlement of the conflict tearing it asunder.

We have seen that the peace process is continuing, but the progress achieved has been very slow, and sometimes even modest. This means that there is a great deal yet to be done. It is obvious that the success of all the activities intended to establish durable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina depends essentially on the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, and that however important the role of the international community, it is up to the authorities of that country to work towards the establishment of a lasting peace. It is also up to them to work responsibly towards the implementation of the Agreement into which they freely entered. It is therefore important that all the parties commit themselves with determination to honour their commitments stemming from the Agreement, first and foremost by ensuring the proper functioning of their common institutions.

We are pleased to note today that progress has been achieved in several areas. Nevertheless, as was pointed out by the delegations that preceded us, much remains to be done in order that the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina can live together in complete peace and security.

We note with bitterness that the humanitarian situation in that country remains difficult. The future of a large number of refugees and displaced persons remains uncertain. Those people have the right to return to their places of origin if they so desire, with the assistance of the High Commissioner for Refugees, in accordance with annex 7 of the Dayton Agreement and thanks to the generous assistance of the host countries. In this regard, we commend the efforts being made by United Nations agencies, the European Union, bilateral donors and others, including non-governmental organizations that set up and carry out projects to facilitate their freedom to return if they so desire, to ensure their safety and to improve their future economic prospects.

We take pleasure in noting that the Open City initiative is continuing.

Local communities that have chosen to declare open cities should be encouraged, and should be given financial assistance. On behalf of my delegation, I wish to reaffirm our commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to the enjoyment by the populations of that country of their constitutional rights.

We are concerned by the constant refusal, particularly in the Republika Srpska, to provide services to minorities; we believe that there must be no discrimination against those populations and that they should have access to basic health care. As citizens of their own country, their health should not be subject to political considerations; all those in need should have access to adequate care.

The international community has a role to play in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For its part, the multinational Stabilization Force (SFOR) has played an indispensable role in helping to create an environment that will foster the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement. We welcome the good cooperation between the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF), and the way in which they have coordinated their activities on the ground. We note with satisfaction that UNMIBH is considering improving the structure of the IPTF so that it can better focus its work on other activities — as it has done in the sphere of human rights.

We agree with the Secretary-General's analysis, as contained in his recent report, and we agree with him about the future role of the United Nations. That is why we agree with and support his recommendation to extend the mandate of UNMIBH for 12 months. An effective United Nations presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still necessary for consolidating peace and the other achievements we have welcomed. In particular, we agree that there must be a reform of the judicial and penal system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the fight against financial crime must be encouraged. Here again, we think there is a decisive role for UNMIBH; with additional human and financial resources it can proceed to the consolidation of peace and the economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We welcome the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held at Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997, including the conclusion that there is a need to maintain an international military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina after June 1998. Such a presence is required for the consolidation of peace and the maintenance of the security and stability that Bosnia and

Herzegovina so sorely needs. We hope that the conclusions of the recent Bonn Conference will help in accelerating and consolidating the peace process.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Guinea-Bissau for the kind words he addressed to Costa Rica and to Ambassador Berrocal Soto.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Argentina, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Petrella (Argentina) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on whom I now call.

Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Thank you, Sir, for honouring the Security Council by presiding over today's debate. Let me express my delegation's confidence in the work of Costa Rica as the presiding member of the Security Council for this month. We are most pleased to have had such good, cordial and businesslike relations with your delegation during this month, and on previous occasions.

In the interests of transparency, I must also thank you, Sir, for another allowance that you made for us, and must admit to something. Frankly, my delegation was neglectful and failed to give me a complete copy of my presentation to the Council, so I had to ask for my presentation to be delayed until this time. I took a look at the Permanent Representative of Chile, who had a very strange look on his face when he realized that he had to speak at a time when he was expecting me to speak. I looked away, of course, because I did not wish to respond to his look of astonishment and, maybe, anger.

But this small difficulty on the part of my delegation may actually have been a blessing in disguise, because it gives me the opportunity to take note in my statement of some of the points raised in the statements of some members of the Council.

Let me take the opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Council for having scheduled today's discussion on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It appears to some that, after having been the subject of so many debates before this body, Bosnia and Herzegovina has strangely fallen off the visible agenda of the Security Council. Some believe this may be because the United Nations has failed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This brings me to the second point: the United Nations has not failed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, neither has it yet succeeded. The faults that exist lie with those who could and should have done more themselves, but who left the United Nations with a job that it could never fully and gloriously complete. Under the circumstances, the United Nations could be seen as having been partially successful at best. It was left to be projected as embarrassingly inadequate, with all its flaws revealed.

Still, we would be lacking intellectual and moral perspective if we failed to note the lives that were saved through the efforts of the United Nations and its various agencies and people and, just as relevantly, if we did not recognize the commitment of the individuals involved, particularly the ones who sacrificed their lives in Bosnia.

On the other hand, the sheer fact that over 250,000 Bosnians — over 5 per cent of our population — lost their lives and that 50 per cent of Bosnia's population was displaced and made into refugees, mostly through the campaign of ethnic cleansing, reveals why the efforts of the United Nations cannot be termed a success. Furthermore, the fact that the consequences of ethnic cleansing remain intact and its perpetrators largely remain free is an even greater blemish.

But is the United Nations to blame? Clearly not alone, and certainly not as an institution. More relevantly, however, we must now examine whether the United Nations is part of a solution that is still forthcoming in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the answer is, "Yes". Increasingly, the United Nations is being asked to play an ever-more-prominent role in securing and enhancing the peace in Bosnia. Let me emphasize here that over the last two years peace has borne positive fruit, and we are confident of an improvement in dynamics.

We welcome the extension of the mandate of the multilateral force led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Bosnia and Herzegovina beyond the deadline of the summer of 1998. It will be the linchpin of concerted efforts to secure a real and lasting peace in our country, with all the beneficial consequences for a better life for all the people of Bosnia. Nonetheless, as the last two years have shown and as has been recognized by many of the leaders today, the military aspect of implementation will prove to be rather hollow without a coordinated and revitalized effort on the so-called civilian aspect of implementation.

The Office of the High Representative must receive the necessary support to most assertively implement the High Representative's mandate. Let me refer here to the words of the Permanent Representative of Japan and take note of his invitation to our athletes. In this context, I would like to point out that at the moment Bosnia and Herzegovina does have a flag and an anthem, but they are not endorsed by all. We recognize that change is forthcoming, and we recognize that we must have a flag that is endorsed by all and an anthem and a passport that are endorsed by all. We encourage the High Representative, if in fact a flag cannot be agreed to, that one be imposed. But we must demand one flag, one anthem, one passport and one currency.

I would also like to take note of the fact that the word "fratricidal" is used around this table. I wish to draw the attention of the Security Council to such a small event as a basketball game played recently in Sarajevo. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the national team, was playing the national team of the Republic of Croatia. On the national basketball team of Bosnia and Herzegovina the best player — the highest scorer — happens to be a Bosnian Serb. We all know it, but we do not talk about it, as a matter of civilized, polite behaviour; we just cheer for him and for the Bosnian team as a whole. When the Bosnian team took the floor, this gentleman, this wonderful basketball player, received the cheers of the entire Sarajevo crowd, regardless of their ethnicity. By coincidence, on the team of the Republic of Croatia there is a gentleman of Bosnian Muslim background. As would be the case with many opponents, he was booed. I apologize to the Republic of Croatia for this incident involving over-zealous sports fans, but it shows that we are not talking here about ethnic and religious hatred. I would also like to make a happy note of the fact that the team of Bosnia and Herzegovina did defeat the team of the Republic of Croatia on that one occasion — I must be a nationalist sometimes.

The various agencies and organs of the United Nations in Bosnia will be decisive in the success of peace. The role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in rolling back the consequences of ethnic cleansing and facilitating the return of refugees from abroad is essential. The International Police Task Force (IPTF) will catalyse concerted efforts to enhance democracy, human rights and respect for the law, as well as freedom of movement and the return of refugees throughout the country. The role of this United Nations institution is determinative. We wholeheartedly support the draft resolution before us.

I am certain that here I will not be able to specifically refer to the whole range of efforts in which the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina is involved, but I must finally mention what is, perhaps, the most critical: the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, established by the United Nations. At this time, I must take the opportunity to most humbly thank Governments, particularly those of the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, for the commitment and the courage of their troops in recent efforts — one of which actually took place this morning — to bring indicted war criminals to justice. Those Governments seem to be most sensitive to the crucial role that the Tribunal has in securing not only justice, but also reconciliation, implementation of the Dayton/Paris accords and a lasting peace. As someone who was in Dayton, I must also emphasize here that the Dayton/Paris accords, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions and our own Constitution, sanction these efforts.

However, we are concerned by recent reports, widely publicized in the press, which seem to some to indicate a lack of respect, or even disdain, for the Tribunal's mandate. It is especially disquieting if this disregard comes from some quarters — not from countries in the region who have in the past refused cooperation, but from some officials from those countries around this table who were instrumental in bringing about the Tribunal as well as the Dayton/Paris accords. To refer to the Tribunal as a "show court" is unacceptable.

Let me make certain that we are understood. I have no fear for Judge Louise Arbour. In fact, we may even have some differences with her; I suppose that we frequently do. I am certain that in a court of law this 1.5 metre Prosecutor is a match for any man around this table; she can take care of herself.

We are concerned, however, about the lack of dignity shown to the Tribunal, about the perception of the Tribunal that this promotes and about the political consequences thereof. First, under the accords signed in Paris, the Tribunal is enshrined in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the court of highest authority in our country — it is our court. A lack of respect for this Tribunal has a direct bearing on us and on respect for our country. Secondly, the Tribunal is not a colonial court. It has not been established only to dictate justice and to have access only to a group of subject people, mainly Bosnians, Serbians and Croatians. By its mandate, it has jurisdiction over all potential witnesses and suspects related to war crimes and genocide that may have been committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the former Yugoslavia as a whole.

Here I must also emphasize our concern, expressed on so many occasions by the President and Prosecutor of the Tribunal, regarding the large number of States that still have not adopted domestic legislation in line with full cooperation with the Tribunal. Again, I must highlight, we are speaking here of countries not only in our own region but, most incomprehensibly, the democracies of the world.

This brings me to the third point. In view of the lack of cooperation of some countries and parties in the region with the Tribunal, and the excuses offered with respect thereto, what kind of disquieting message — encouragement — is being offered to these parties, to these countries, if there is a lack of respect and commitment shown to the Tribunal by some officials in some democracies? I emphasize "some officials".

Let me again try to be clear. My statement is not intended to be an indictment of any country. The quality of leadership, courage and commitment is not determined by the flag of the individual involved. While I had a rather low opinion of one military commander who came from that country and who served in Bosnia, it is also a personal opinion that the most courageous and forthright commander who served in Bosnia in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) also came from the United Kingdom. He does deserve to have his name mentioned here: General Rupert Smith. He made peace possible in Bosnia. Frankly, sometimes I am still troubled by how he has been forgotten while other less distinguished past commanders paraded before television cameras and promoted themselves. He never did.

We are also aware of the tremendous courage and commitment exhibited by so many French troops and, in particular, the inordinate sacrifices. Their sacrifices deserve to be recalled here again. We are also thankful for the timely leadership and courage of French leaders at crucial points during the critical stages of the peace process.

While political decisions, for good or bad, may have been made in capitals, it is the individual that exhibited courage or cowardice, morality or shame, legality or illegality on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is the individual soldier or officer that witnessed the good and the bad, the acts of compassion as well as acts amounting to crimes and genocide.

The only duty of States now, in this context, is to ensure that full evidence is provided and that the Tribunal has full access to witnesses and culpable individuals.

Finally, I ask United Nations Members to remember that, despite the many contributions their nations have made, in terms of lives and resources — and I repeat that we are sincerely most grateful — it is the Bosnians that paid the highest price, and it is Bosnians of all backgrounds that seek from the Tribunal the greatest asset that civilization can provide: justice.

So, as we approach a new and, hopefully, better turn on the road to a lasting peace in Bosnia, yes, we must underscore that the future is mostly the responsibility of Bosnians, all Bosnians. However, we cannot sit around this table and not take note of the responsibility of all our countries, all members' countries to contribute. This is especially critical in situations in which we all establish multilateral institutions, organs of this United Nations. For the sake of the victims, for the sake of this United Nations, for our common future, we cannot say one thing here around this table, but do something else at home.

Keeping in mind this primary criterion for both integrity and mutual benefit, I am certain that with the assistance of all, and particularly the United Nations, Bosnians will secure lasting peace, with all its benefits.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his statement and for his very kind words regarding Costa Rica, and in particular regarding the members of the Permanent Mission of my country here in New York.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): It is my pleasure to address the Council under your presidency, Sir, as you are the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, a country which shines as a beacon in its commitment to peace and security.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have witnessed the most savage and barbaric conflict since the Second World War. They were subjected to diabolic and deleterious genocide and "ethnic cleansing". Though the war has finally come to an end, the effects of the four-year-long conflict have not yet disappeared. The scar of the bitter past in the minds of the aggrieved community is deep. The healing process is arduous, considering the deep fissures and cleavages caused to the very fabric of society.

Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords two years ago, important progress has been achieved towards resurrecting the unity and territorial integrity of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but there still remains a lot to be done. The areas where progress has not been satisfactory include the return of all refugees and displaced persons; freedom of movement across the inter-entity boundary lines, and the effective functioning of the common State structure, namely, the Presidency, the Council of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly. While the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has extended full cooperation in achieving these goals the Serbian entity demonstrated a lack of commitment, seriously hampering international efforts.

In the military field, the Serbs also continue to evade their obligations under the Agreement on Regional Stabilization and the Agreement on Arms Control, which are vital for ensuring regional stability. We must ensure that all parties fulfil their declared reduction liabilities and implementation of other related obligations.

On the issue of criminal proceedings against the perpetrators of genocide, the international community must ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the Dayton Accords by all parties, particularly the Serbian entity, in apprehending the indicted criminals. The United Nations troops on the ground must also cooperate with the International Tribunal in achieving the ideal of peace with justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this regard, we welcome the role of British and Dutch troops in apprehending some indicted war criminals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The perpetrators of mass killings must not go unpunished, be it in Bosnia, in Afghanistan or in Kashmir.

During the last two years, the United Nations troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina have contributed enormously in ensuring relative security in the entire region. We support the continued presence of the United Nations forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing a secure environment for the implementation of the civilian aspects of the peace plan beyond June 1998.

The International Police Task Force (IPTF) faces enormous opposition from the Bosnian Serbs in reforming the police institution, which is a matter of concern to all of us. We support the efforts of the IPTF in the restructuring and training of the police to operate according to the principles of democratic policing, carry out weapons inspections, promote freedom of movement and prevent financial crime, smuggling and corruption. These efforts will bear fruit if accompanied by a reform of the judicial system, for which we must provide adequate resources and qualified personnel. In supplementing the efforts of the United Nations in these areas, Pakistan has provided 100 police personnel for the IPTF and has expressed readiness to provide additional police personnel whenever required. We are also implementing a programme for the training of 200 Bosnian military personnel.

My delegation supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the IPTF to pursue the work entrusted to them in accordance with Annex 11 of the Peace Agreement.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Pakistan's unqualified moral, political and economic support for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our support has always been based on our conviction that no nation should be victimized because of its smaller size and that no peoples should be brutalized because of their ethnic origin. We also believe that no nation and no people should be denied their inherent right to self-determination and their right to wage a legitimate struggle for their liberation.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Pakistan for his kind words about Costa Rica.

The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Biørn Lian (Norway): Allow me first of all to thank the Costa Rican presidency for organizing this open debate on Bosnia in the Security Council, and to voice our satisfaction at seeing you, Mr. Foreign Minister, presiding over this important meeting. It is indeed an honour to take the floor under your presidency.

We see today's meeting as a timely occasion for the members of the Council and for other United Nations member countries to take stock of the situation and again demonstrate their commitment to a continued international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would also like to congratulate Ms. Elisabeth Rehn of Finland on her appointment as new Special Representative and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia to succeed Mr. Kai Eide of Norway. We can assure Ms. Rehn of our full cooperation and assistance in fulfilling her mandate.

The international community has invested heavily in the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the Peace Implementation Conference in Bonn last week it was agreed that important progress has been achieved, but also that a lot remains to be done. Norway supports a more persistent approach to ensure that the parties fulfil their commitments and take increased responsibility in the implementation of the Peace Agreement. We welcome the intention of the High Representative to make full use of his mandate in order to push the peace process forward. International involvement and support will still be needed in Bosnia. Norway will remain actively engaged, but we demand at the same time full cooperation from all parties. In our opinion, there is no alternative to the Dayton Agreement and compliance with this Agreement will continue to be a condition for Norwegian aid and assistance to Bosnia.

Norway highly appreciates the important work that the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and the International Police Task Force (IPTF) continue to perform in the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement, including in the areas of police reform, return of refugees, mine clearance and humanitarian and economic assistance.

We therefore fully support the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the UNMIBH/IPTF mandate for a further period that would add up to 12 months unless there were substantial changes in the security arrangements produced by the Stabilization Force (SFOR), and we would welcome a decision by the Security Council to this effect.

Within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), we have now also started the process of considering post-SFOR options in Bosnia. Norway firmly believes that the stabilizing presence of a NATO-led military follow-on force, authorized by a Security Council mandate, will also be required after June 1998, when the current SFOR mandate expires, in order to consolidate our gains and provide vital support to the civilian agencies involved. Together with our allies and partners, Norway will continue to participate with troops in such a common endeavour.

Continued support from a robust and credible NATO-led military force will not least be crucial to a successful completion of IPTF's efforts to restructure, retrain and reform the local police and judicial system in Bosnia in order to help them handle public security in a manner which is professionally sound, democratic and observant of human and minority rights. Norway doubts whether any other formula can realistically function more effectively than the SFOR-IPTF cooperation.

There seems, furthermore, to be an emerging agreement that mandating the arming of IPTF personnel to take on law enforcement tasks is not a viable option. Norway remains convinced that the right way to go is, rather, to increase international assistance to IPTF's efforts. For our part, we are about to provide $400,000 for the support of police academies and the purchase of uniforms in Bosnia, thereby bringing our 1997 contribution to over $1 million. We also intend to step up our contributions for next year, by providing more IPTF police personnel with special qualifications, including training skills, and by making further financial contributions to the IPTF's police reform efforts.

Norway continues to be concerned about the serious landmine problems in Bosnia. We will therefore also carry on our support of mine clearance efforts, both through the programmes of the Norwegian People's Aid and the activities of the United Nations Mine Action Centre.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to the men and women working for UNMIBH and IPTF, including those who have tragically lost their lives, and to pay the same tribute to those working for other organizations and non-governmental

organizations in the service of peace and a better life for the Bosnian peoples.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Norway for his kind words addressed to me.

Several speakers inscribed on my list have not yet taken the floor. In view of the lateness of the hour, with the concurrence of members of the Council I will now suspend the meeting. The meeting is suspended until tomorrow, Friday, 19 December 1997, when it will resume at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting was suspended at 6 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.3842 (Resumption)

Security Council

Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3842nd Meeting
Friday, 19 December 1997, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Berrocal Soto	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Lopes Da Rosa
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/1997/966)

97-86794 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was resumed at 10.45 a.m.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Marzuki (Malaysia): Mr. President, my delegation is pleased to participate under your able chairmanship in this formal meeting of the Council to consider extending the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF). Malaysia recognizes the important role played by the IPTF in promoting civil security by working closely with the parties to achieve the fundamental reforms in law enforcement institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We therefore welcome the extension of its mandate by this Council. Malaysia is privileged and honoured to be part of the IPTF in implementing its important tasks as outlined in annex II of the Dayton Peace Agreement. We call on the international community to provide the IPTF with the necessary financial and material assistance so as to enable it to carry out the additional tasks assigned to it by the London and Bonn Conferences of the Peace Implementation Council.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the men and women from various countries serving under the Stabilization Force (SFOR) and the IPTF and other international organizations who have contributed so significantly to the current peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to offer our condolences to the families of the 12 dedicated officers who lost their lives in a tragic helicopter crash last September.

Thanks to the presence of the multinational force, a relatively safe and secure environment has now prevailed. Important efforts towards building a unified Bosnia and Herzegovina have begun to take root. The common State institutions have been formed and are functioning, albeit inefficiently. Increasing numbers of the displaced Bosnians are beginning to feel confident enough to return to their homes. At the same time, the international community has made a significant contribution in the reconstruction efforts, helping to put Bosnia and Herzegovina back on its feet economically.

However, we are concerned that serious obstacles continue to impede the full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Mutual mistrust and animosity among the different ethnic groups continue to obstruct efforts towards realizing the ultimate objective of making peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina an irreversible process. We wish to remind the parties concerned that there is no viable alterative to the Peace Agreement as the foundation for building lasting peace and prosperity in a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multireligious Bosnia and Herzegovina. The attainment of this goal requires the full commitment of the Bosnian leaders themselves. They all must be willing to take bold steps towards establishing a multiethnic State within its internationally recognized boundaries, with fully functioning common State institutions that command the support and confidence of the people.

When the parties accepted the Dayton Peace Agreement two years ago, they made a contract and a commitment to, *inter alia*, respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is therefore imperative that they keep their commitments, including ensuring that all the joint State institutions are duly constituted and functioning efficiently and effectively, and that all the attributes of a sovereign State are fully bestowed on Bosnia and Herzegovina to enable it to take its rightful place within the family of nations. In this regard, the Bosnian entities must work strenuously towards resolving the problems now confronting the State, from the issue of appropriate State symbols to the question of the currency and to various laws that need to be passed by the parliamentary Assembly.

My delegation believes that a durable peace can be guaranteed in Bosnia and Herzegovina only through reconciliation among its people on the basis of the principles of justice and the rule of law. It is therefore imperative that the perpetrators of the horrendous crimes against humanity in Bosnia and Herzegovina be made to face the consequences of their past actions. In this regard, we are seriously concerned that many of the indicted war criminals, including the most-wanted indictees, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, are still at large and continue to exercise political influence and leadership in the Serb entity. Their continued freedom constitutes a major obstacle to the efforts to create a lasting peace in a unified Bosnia and Herzegovina. If the long-term prospects for peace are not to be undermined, they must be immediately apprehended and brought to trial before the Tribunal established for this purpose in The Hague. The trial and appropriate punishment of those guilty of the heinous crimes against humanity are indispensable in bringing about national reconciliation, on

which so much of the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina depends. My delegation believes that SFOR has a critical role to play in apprehending these indicted war criminals. In this regard, we commend the courageous action of SFOR in arresting the two indicted war criminals.

To his great credit, the President of the Tribunal, Judge Antonio Cassese, in presenting the Tribunal's fourth annual report to the General Assembly last month, was forthright in singling out the Serb entity and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as the parties that have repeatedly refused to cooperate with the Tribunal. We view their refusal to recognize the authority of the Tribunal established by this Council as a direct affront to the Council and the United Nations as a whole and one which should not be allowed to continue with impunity.

My delegation is concerned at the continued violations of freedom of movement and at the harassment, destruction of property and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and political affiliation that occur in many areas, especially in the Serb entity. This has hampered the safe return of refugees and displaced persons, and only a quarter of the estimated 2 million refugees and displaced persons have been able to return, most to the areas in which they belong to the ethnic majority. It is essential that all the relevant agencies, including SFOR and the IPTF, provide the necessary support to the High Representative and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the successful implementation of the return programme, particularly with regard to minority returnees, who have thus far encountered political, security and administrative impediments. Clearly, the success of the return programme is critical to the realization of a viable Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the peace implementation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina enters its most critical stage, it is imperative that the relatively safe and secure environment created by the presence of the multinational force be maintained and further consolidated to ensure that all the efforts and resources invested so far will bear the desired results. The international community cannot take the risk of withdrawing the multinational forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina at a time when State institutions are still weak, suspicions and mistrust are still very much in evidence and indicted war criminals are still free and exercising influence and authority in the background.

In this regard, Malaysia welcomes the ongoing discussions on the future role of the international peacekeepers after the expiration of the SFOR mandate in June 1998. We hope for a final consensus on this vitally important issue and are encouraged by some positive developments in that direction. We welcome in particular the decision of the United States to extend the role of its forces in SFOR. We consider a continuing military role by the United States as pivotal to the viability of the international peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that the further presence of an international force is necessary, and, as a troop-contributing country, Malaysia will be prepared to engage in consultations on that subject.

Clearly, there is a need to build confidence, understanding and friendship among the ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina so that it may be able to sustain the process of national reconciliation. For this purpose, Malaysia is prepared to make a modest contribution by organizing a series of informal forums or workshops with the participation of Bosnian groups and individuals and international experts and facilitators. With the support of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malaysia proposes to convene this forum in Malaysia soon. We believe that, given its unique multi-ethnic, multilingual and multireligious background and experience at nation-building, Malaysia can make a positive contribution in this area. While the international community will continue to assist, the main responsibility for carrying out the tasks of nation building ultimately lies with the Bosnian people themselves. Only when they earnestly and sincerely carry out their commitments under the Peace Agreement will the peace settlement be truly achieved and the peace process irreversible.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Slovenia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): Mr. President, I wish to begin by expressing our sincere appreciation of the fact that this meeting of the Security Council is taking place under the presidency of Costa Rica. The role of your country in international peace is exemplary, and we believe that it is most fitting and symbolic that the discussion and the search for durable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is taking place under your presidency. We are sure that this month of December will be successful for the Security Council.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be a matter of international concern. While some progress has been made in the implementation of

Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, as noted in the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is obvious that further sustained efforts of the international community are indispensable to stabilize the situation and to make the peace process irreversible.

There have been some developments that should encourage our common effort for peace. The Peace Agreement concluded two years ago has been an important achievement in itself. It stopped the war and opened the path towards preservation of the independence, sovereignty, legal continuity and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The implementation of the Peace Agreement has established the lasting cessation of hostilities and represents important progress in the domain of arms reduction. The efforts of the High Representative have gained wide international recognition and support. A plethora of international organizations, financial institutions and non-governmental organizations have contributed to various aspects of the efforts to achieve economic reconstruction and a durable peace.

Slovenia has actively joined these efforts. Recently, it assumed further responsibility by becoming member of the Stabilization Force (SFOR), and we are cooperating closely with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in contributing to various options for the post-SFOR operation. In addition, Slovenia is in the process of establishing an international fund for demining and for assistance to mine victims.

The international concern for the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been most clearly expressed at the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997. The Peace Implementation Council reaffirmed that there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement as the foundation for political and economic reconstruction in Bosnia. The vital contribution of the multinational Stabilization Force in providing a secure environment for the implementation of the Peace Agreement has been widely recognized. The Peace Implementation Council confirmed an emerging consensus on the need for an international military presence to continue beyond June 1998. This remains indispensable for any progress in the peace process in the future, and we welcome the recent decisions in that connection.

The message of the Peace implementation Council is clear: The responsibility for consolidating the peace rests primarily with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The immediate neighbours of Bosnia and Herzegovina are expected to take a constructive approach to achieving this end and must assist in the endeavours for peace. Finally, the international community has to take a robust stance towards all the major problems impeding the peace process.

These messages were echoed and strengthened in resolution 52/150 on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, adopted by the General Assembly earlier this week on 15 December. Slovenia is gratified that the resolution was adopted by consensus, which clearly reflects the unity and resolve of the entire international community to work together for a just and durable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the removal of all obstacles that still impede that process.

Among the impediments to peace, some are obvious, as are the measures to expedite their removal. Stricter measures are needed to remove the war criminals from their positions of influence over decision-making and to transfer them for trial to the international war crimes Tribunal. The efforts to secure compliance with the orders of the Tribunal have to be supported and the courage of those involved in such efforts, including the most recent, have to be commended. The Security Council should encourage further efforts to bring the criminals to justice and enhance the effectiveness of the Tribunal, which the Security Council established in 1993. This would not only strengthen justice as a value in itself and safeguard the credibility of the Security Council, but would also create important conditions for the success of the peace efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Security Council should also render its political support for the voluntary repatriation of refugees and for the removal of obstacles which hinder the process of repatriation. Harassment of the returnees, intimidation and killings designed to discourage the voluntary return of refugees must be stopped and, if that becomes necessary, the Security Council should consider specific measures against those responsible for such acts.

The return of refugees is also vital for the proper functioning of the elected institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the restoration of the ethnic diversity that has always represented the essence of the identity of the country. Therefore, it is essential for the very existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent and united country. The need to prevent attempts to undermine the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina or to achieve domination by a single group over the common institutions will be best met by ensuring

the restoration, to the largest extent possible, of the ethnic balance in the country. The basic guarantee to achieving this is to ensure the necessary level of security of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a requirement which could gradually lose its centrality in the peace process, in accordance with the overall progress. However, it is of central importance now and every effort must be made to strengthen it. A continued international military presence and the strengthening of the police component are the main pillars of a secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We support the suggestions of the Secretary-General concerning the strengthening of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) monitoring of police activities with a view to effectively dealing with problems like corruption, smuggling and financial crime. One important area of these activities is also the functioning of the border-control police units.

In addition to providing a secure environment, the multinational Force should also take an even more active role in supporting the Peace Agreement and those who implement it. On the other hand, the Force should take active steps against those who oppose the Peace Agreement or refuse to comply with its provisions. The multinational military and police forces need to play a role in apprehending the indicted war criminals and in clearing the obstacles to the safe and voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons.

The success of other aspects of the peace process will, to a large extent, depend on the completion of these tasks. In this area, we see the primary challenge for the High Representative. We therefore welcome and support the strengthening of his mandate, in accordance with the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference.

Let me conclude by saying the following: The efforts of the international community so far have brought some important progress in the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We should renew and reinforce our commitment to pursuing this process further and rendering it irreversible.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Slovenia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Çelem (Turkey): At the outset, my delegation would like to commend the Costa Rican presidency and the Security Council for scheduling an open debate on this very important subject at this crucial stage. We expressed our views in depth on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the General Assembly in the debate under agenda item 47 three days ago. Therefore, I will be brief.

It is noteworthy that considerable progress has been made in implementing peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the signing of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement. The fact is that, since the signing of the Peace Agreement, considerable progress has been achieved in the military field. Nonetheless, lack of compliance on some crucial civilian aspects of the Agreement indicates that the task undertaken by the international community is far from complete. As accurately reflected, most recently in the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference of 9 and 10 December 1997, the fragility of the situation in the country compels us to maintain a stable security environment. The Secretary-General's reports of 8 September and 10 December 1997 and the latest report of the High Representative for the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina all point to the fact that the peace process has not yet become irreversible.

In this respect, I would like to reaffirm Turkey's full support for the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the annexes thereto. They constitute the basis for the establishment of a durable and just peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to heal the wounds of the war and to attain lasting peace, it is incumbent upon the international community to exert every effort to help Bosnia and Herzegovina in its arduous endeavour for reconciliation and reintegration. Turkey, along with other States, is actively participating in the implementation of both the military and civilian aspects of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and is ready, on its part, to continue doing so.

With its resolution 52/150, the General Assembly recently reiterated its full commitment to the stabilization and consolidation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and reconciliation among its constituent peoples. We welcome this unanimous decision reaffirming its concern about non-compliance with the peace agreement and demonstrating its willingness to take the necessary measures in its power to obtain full implementation. For this purpose, it is essential that all the conditions

envisaged by the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement — *inter alia*, cooperation with the International Tribunal, the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes and the establishment of common institutions — materialize without delay.

It is not possible to overstate the importance of the work of the International Tribunal for the process of reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey supports fully the efforts of the International Tribunal aimed at the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991 and believes that States and parties to the Peace Agreement must meet their obligations to cooperate with the Tribunal.

The conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina held in Bonn drew particular attention to the failure of the authorities of the Republika Srpska entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to carry out their obligations. It is the duty of the international community to exert the necessary pressure on the parties which do not live up to their legal obligations of cooperating with the Tribunal. At this juncture, it is important to recall that, under the Dayton Accord, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is responsible for the Serbian entity's cooperation and compliance, as well as its own.

Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), the Sintra Political Declaration of the Ministerial Meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council and, just recently, the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference all confirmed that international economic aid is conditional upon compliance with and implementation of the Peace Agreement. In this regard, we would like to stress the need for timely information about the level of cooperation and compliance so that necessary assessments can be made.

Turkey welcomes the positive steps taken towards a normalization of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, there is ample room for progress in this respect. Therefore, we call upon the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to fulfil immediately the requirement of establishing full and unconditional diplomatic relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that such a development will provide the necessary tool to remove some of the existing hurdles on the road to normalization.

Turkey also welcomes the successful conclusion of the local elections of 13 and 14 September 1997. We expect full and unconditional implementation of the election results. Any attempt not to implement them will hamper the delicate process underway.

Economic revitalization is essential for the process of reconciliation, the improvement of living conditions and the maintenance of durable peace, both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region. However, we are dismayed that the package of essential legislation establishing the common institutions of economic management has not been implemented in full; nor has the State-level legislation specified in the Sintra Declaration been adopted. We hope that necessary steps will be taken immediately, so that Bosnia and Herzegovina can have an economic policy framework which would allow it to start taking advantage of the multilateral economic assistance already available. As urged by the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group on 7 December 1997, the international community must disburse expeditiously the funds pledged for the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Implementation Force (IFOR) has played a crucial role in preserving peace and order and in ensuring progress on the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey believes that the Stabilization Force (SFOR), as the successor to IFOR, has been indispensable for the maintenance of a stable security environment essential for deterring or, if necessary, halting a resumption of hostilities. We welcome the emerging consensus on the need for a military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue beyond June 1998. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his last report,

> "Much has been achieved, but much also remains to be done." [S/1997/966, para. 45]

At this volatile stage of the peace process, it is essential that the international community continue to exert itself persistently in order to achieve a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Turkey for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Hungary. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Erdös (Hungary) (*interpretation from French*): Hungary welcomes this discussion in the Security Council of the activities undertaken by the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the tasks that remain to be completed in order to implement the decisions made in the framework of the Dayton Agreement. We note in particular the importance of the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held recently in Bonn, which emphasized building on the achievements of the peace process, continuing international assistance and strengthening the role of the High Representative.

Hungary, which neighbours the Balkan region, is profoundly attached to a political settlement of the issues of conflict on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. It is also attached to the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of all the other successor States of the former Yugoslavia. We reject vigorously the proposals that have been made here and there suggesting the dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a solution. It is not necessary to dwell at length on the possible negative repercussions of such destructive ideas.

We welcome the determination of the international community to proceed on the track of carrying out the civilian aspects of the Dayton Agreement. We also welcome the intention of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina for an additional period. Hungary joined the peacekeeping operations in 1996 by opening a base for the Stabilization Force at Taszár, in the south of our country, and by sending a logistical contingent of 500 people, which last year was able to rebuild 20 bridges used for railway and surface transportation. That contingent also began demining operations in the immediate vicinity of those bridges. This year the contingent is continuing its reconstruction activities without interruption, in order to facilitate the resumption of normal economic and commercial life in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Likewise, my country has participated in the operations of the International Police Task Force since it was created and at the beginning of this year again increased the number of its personnel serving in the Force.

Nevertheless, we note that the efforts made to improve the economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina could be accelerated further if the necessary economic legislation were implemented and if the functioning of the central bodies were made more effective. It is harmful for Bosnia and Herzegovina that the laws which are absolutely necessary for the recovery of the country's economic life have not yet been approved by the competent bodies because of differences in views, a lack of confidence or the absence of political will.

Nor can we fail to underscore the importance of reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for if peace and political and economic stability are not accompanied by the corresponding psychological changes in the citizenry, the situation in the country will remain fragile and the results of the peace process may be reversed. Administering justice, monitoring respect for human rights — including the rights of minorities — education, spreading the values of democracy and a free press could contribute greatly to this process.

We note with satisfaction the arrest in Bosnia and Herzegovina of two more individuals accused of war crimes. We encourage the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Stabilization Force to continue their activities in this sphere, while emphasizing the need to secure the full cooperation of all three communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and of neighbouring countries as well, so that the number of those brought to justice will accurately reflect the true dimensions of the atrocities committed there. It is time we remembered the bitter lessons of this bloody century of ours, recalling the words spoken at Nuremberg in November 1945 by the United States judge Robert Jackson:

(spoke in English)

> "The wrongs which we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive their being repeated".

(spoke in French)

One might well wonder how many times the horrors of the past will have to be repeated. The parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the immediate neighbours of that country must also shoulder their share of the responsibility in efforts to reject vigorously aggressive nationalist, racist and ethnocentric theories — theories

that in fact contributed greatly to kindling the inferno in the former Yugoslavia.

We are convinced that in spite of the difficulties and the passage of time, the international community must not turn away from the developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and must maintain its civilian and military presence in that country. Here, Hungary welcomes yesterday's announcement on this matter by the President of the United States, and is prepared to continue to contribute to reaching the objectives of the Dayton Agreement. The Security Council can play an enormous role in the uniquely complex endeavour aimed at restoring normalcy to this sorely tried country.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): It gives me special pleasure, Mr. President, to take part in this meeting under your leadership. It is by coincidence that I had the honour today to transmit to the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations my foreign ministry's agreement to the appointment of the first Ambassador of Costa Rica to Ukraine.

Looking at the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina after more than six years of United Nations involvement and two years after the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed, the international community can feel some sort of relief and cautious optimism concerning the future of that country. Despite the problems and the persistent difficulties on the road towards the establishment of a democratic, multiethnic State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we cannot deny the remarkable progress that has been made.

There is no doubt that it has been achieved thanks in the first place to the efforts of the parties to the Peace Agreement. However, the process could have been much more difficult had it not been facilitated by the continuous assistance of the international community. It is also true that, despite signs of overall improvement, the present situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as that in the whole region, will continue to require agile efforts.

The Peace Implementation Conference held at Bonn earlier this month demonstrated once again the existence of a strong international commitment to the process of reconciliation and nation-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The international community must concentrate on preventing the political development of the country from moving in a direction contrary to the Peace Agreement. In this regard we should remove the temptation to use military force and the fear that the latter will be used. Ukraine shares the view that the Stabilization Force (SFOR) authorized by Security Council resolution 1088 (1996) continues to be an important element in securing the first outcomes of the ongoing process of reconciliation and State-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in contributing to the stabilization of the situation in the Balkans.

We believe that the continued military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not be limited by specific time limits, but should be measured by the progress in the implementation of the Peace Agreement. This presence can only ensure the concentration on the political, economic and social issues and challenges that is so desperately required.

Therefore, my delegation fully supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), which includes the International Police Task Force (IPTF), to pursue the work entrusted to it in accordance with annex 11 of the Peace Agreement. With this in mind, my country stands ready to extend its participation in a feasible post-SFOR operation to be mandated by the Security Council beyond June 1998.

The delegation of Ukraine is convinced that the role of the United Nations in the process of reconciliation and civilian consolidation in Bosnia remains indispensable. At the same time, inasmuch as further success in implementing the Peace Agreement depends largely on the fulfilment of its civilian aspects, the United Nations role in the solution of the humanitarian problems should be increased. In our view, the issues of demining, economic reconstruction, human rights, the return of refugees and law enforcement are of special importance. The proper coordination of humanitarian efforts between the United Nations bodies in the field and all other international structures involved, including the Office of the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, non-governmental organizations and others, as well as between SFOR and the IPTF, will be extremely helpful to that end. As no agency has the lead in the field of human rights, further coordination among the various organizations dealing with different aspects of this problem is also necessary.

Demining still represents one of the serious obstacles hampering the effective implementation of the civilian aspects of the Agreement. There is no doubt that the solution of this problem would substantially contribute to the return of refugees, increased freedom of movement and the economic reconstruction of the whole country.

As one of the contributors of personnel to the IPTF, Ukraine notes with satisfaction that the Force has become more assertive in focusing on enhancing freedom of movement, police training and protection of human rights. A high level of cooperation between the IPTF and SFOR on the ground has proved to be very effective and should thus be further developed.

The progress reached under IPTF guidance in police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina is also remarkable and commendable. At the same time, we are of the view that the multifaceted process of implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton accords, in particular police reform in the Federation and the Republika Srpska, should acquire a more integrated character. Future progress cannot be achieved in one sphere without being complemented by relevant measures in another. We therefore share the view that police reform in Bosnia necessitates adequate changes in the country's whole judicial and penal systems.

It will be difficult to achieve final success in the peace process in Bosnia unless the process is supported by effective economic reconstruction in the country with the continued assistance of the international donor community. Top priority should be given to projects aimed at promoting economic cooperation between the Federation and the Republika Srpska, as well as within the Federation itself. Both multiethnic entities and the three constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with all other peoples residing in the country, should equally enjoy the advantages of economic recovery, including international financial aid.

In this context, I should like to stress that all these practical measures aimed at improving everyday life should be guided by the need to build confidence and mutual trust among the multi-ethnic entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

However, the primary responsibility for building a viable democratic society as well as lasting peace and reconciliation lies with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This will become a reality only with the full implementation of the Peace Agreement by the parties themselves, since it is up to them alone to define the destiny of the country.

Finally, my delegation would like to join previous speakers in paying special tribute to those who have tragically lost their lives in the name of peace and a better life for the Bosnian people. I should like also to take this opportunity to confirm Ukraine's steadfast commitment to the cause of peace in Bosnia in the pursuit of a secure and prosperous future for that country and in the Balkans as a whole, which, hopefully, has come closer during the past year.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Ukraine for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): Canada is pleased to participate in this meeting of the Security Council in its consideration of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF).

Canada is pleased to continue its support for and contribution to the IPTF in Bosnia. The IPTF is the largest international police mission ever fielded. Its existence is an indication of the increasing importance of the role of civilian police in peacekeeping operations. Civilian police provide the transition from military to civilian authority, from peacekeeping to peace-building. In democratic societies, there is a security covenant between the government and the people. This covenant is still fragile in Bosnia, hence the role for the international military and civilian police forces. The military provides space between factions, and the police mission provides monitoring and training for local forces, so that democratic institutions can take root.

Democracy and national reconciliation depend on the rule of law. The establishment of a capable, professional and motivated multi-ethnic Bosnian police force is key to achieving that goal.

Canada supported the call for a strengthened IPTF for Bosnia at meetings held in October and December 1996 in Paris and London. That support was reinforced at meetings of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council in Istanbul, Sintra, and, last week, in Bonn. The IPTF has begun to show results. Throughout Bosnia, it is carrying out rigorous weapons inspections, reducing the number of illegal checkpoints

and applying pressure to ensure that joint police uniforms and vehicles are used. It has also started a restructuring and training programme with the Republika Srpska police. However, it will take some time for training in the rule of law and in democratic, community-based policing to have some effect on ingrained attitudes.

(spoke in English)

Canada is pleased that the training component of the IPTF's role is now expanding. This is all the more reason for careful coordination between training agencies, the United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) and IPTF contributors. We would welcome an update on the training programme which discusses its effectiveness and future plans.

The IPTF faces structural challenges inherent to any large United Nations mission. It could be more effective if there were better screening and training of international police before deployment. Improved administration and a clearer chain of command would also enhance the IPTF's capabilities. In addition, it must work with small groups of civilian police who arrive in Bosnia with different training backgrounds and capabilities, and who are then placed in mixed units in isolated police stations throughout the country. Despite the evident difficulties, this approach offers, of course, the opportunity for civilian police to exchange training methods, and demonstrates to the local population that multi-ethnic policing can be effective.

The IPTF's mandate, role and, indeed, its very existence in training and monitoring are linked for the foreseeable future to the continued presence of a military stabilizing factor — currently the Stabilization Force (SFOR), led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and authorized by the United Nations Security Council. In order to gain the confidence of all parties, the IPTF must be unarmed. However, the ability of the IPTF to call on SFOR is equally important in carrying out its operations. Recent successes with regard to investigations, removal of roadblocks, weapons inspections and prison monitoring would not have been possible without backing from SFOR to enforce IPTF requirements.

Recently, some have suggested that there may be a gap between the mandates of SFOR and the IPTF which should be filled by armed police. This might be better characterized as an attitude gap. SFOR and the IPTF have unique and mutually supporting responsibilities for establishing sustainable security and the transition to peace-building in Bosnia. However, and this I emphasize, we should not lose sight of our goal: reinforcement of the capacity and willingness of the local police and Government to fully assume their responsibilities within a context of peace. These are their responsibilities, which we urge them to assume and exercise. We, the international community, must avoid the temptation of displacing these authorities. This would send the wrong message, and the underlying local conditions would remain unchanged.

In a related effort to empower Bosnian authorities, the United Nations will shortly begin transferring the authority of the Mine Action Centre to the local government. This is a significant responsibility which Bosnian leaders will need to address seriously. The scourge of land mines is very real in Bosnia and will require new leadership on the part of Bosnian politicians from all sides. For its part, Canada provided the largest in-kind contribution of demining experts of any participating nation to the Mine Action Centre from April to September 1997, and continued to provide personnel until just recently. We expect we will also provide personnel to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre next year.

In another related effort, as part of the international community's drive for justice and peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada announced the day before yesterday an additional financial contribution of $600,000 and five additional crime analysts to the International War Crimes Tribunal to support its work of exhuming mass graves in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Close cooperation between the IPTF and SFOR in recent months has been effective in implementing the Dayton peace agreements and in ensuring that local police function effectively. SFOR and the IPTF must continue to combine their efforts, taking action in a coordinated and creative fashion, using their respective strengths as part of a long-term commitment by the international community.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Luxembourg. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia,

Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — and the associated country Cyprus, as well as Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union wishes first of all to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Kai Eide, for the tireless efforts that he, his deputy and the other members of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular the members of the International Police Task Force (IPTF), have made to assist in the establishment of a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Special Representative, Ms. Elizabeth Rehn, and to assure her of our full cooperation and assistance in the discharge of her important responsibilities.

The adoption without a vote by the General Assembly on Monday, 15 December 1997, of the resolution on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a clear message of support for the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the part of the international community.

The European Union wishes to recall that there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement, which is the foundation for the political and economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two multi-ethnic entities. The process initiated two years ago has been characterized by the fact that it has been possible to implement efficiently the military aspects of the agreements. Furthermore, the international community has launched a substantial effort to rebuild infrastructure in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Full respect for human rights and the rights of minorities is closely linked to the restoration of a multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina, with institutions operating in full respect for the rule of law and in conformity with universally recognized principles of justice.

One of the most delicate areas, which remains a determining factor for the return to normality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is the training of police forces. Indeed, a great many refugees and displaced persons, including those from regions in which they were members of minority groups, have still not returned home for fear of acts of intimidation and violence. Administrative and legal measures must be taken immediately to put an end to such acts. If these measures are to be implemented promptly and without discrimination, action by a police force imbued with democratic principles is essential.

The European Union welcomes the progress made in the two entities in restructuring the police thanks to the tireless activities of the International Police Task Force. In particular, we wish to welcome the disbandment of the special units, the re-entry into the regular civilian police of some qualified members of those units and the creation of mixed police patrols. Furthermore, we wish to underline the importance of organizing in the territory of both entities courses on respect for human dignity and on the role of the police in a democratic society, as well as the importance of reopening and developing police academies to ensure the training of police in accordance with democratic principles.

Improved cooperation between the IPTF and the local police, in the context of promoting freedom of movement between and within the entities, and with the assistance of the Stabilization Force, has enabled many illegal checkpoints to be dismantled. The number of checkpoints has been considerably reduced, and we wish to welcome this positive development.

The close cooperation between the International Police Task Force and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) made it possible to hold orderly local elections on 13 and 14 September 1997 and for the Assembly of Republika Srpska on 22 and 23 November 1997. This cooperation bodes well for the general elections scheduled to take place in 1998 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To this end, the reform of the media must be successfully completed so that they can operate in a democratic and pluralist manner. The multi-ethnicity of the parties needs to be developed.

The European Union wishes to pay tribute to the work carried out by other divisions of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular the Civil Affairs division, the Human Rights Office and the Office of Press and Information. Furthermore, the European Union wishes to underline the importance of the Mine Action Centre, which will be called upon to continue to play an essential role in Bosnia and Herzegovina after 1 January 1998, with the implementation of the Agreed Principles for Demining, which have been agreed upon by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While 1997 has seen real progress, further efforts will have to be made in such diverse areas as the re-establishment of security, the bringing to justice of those responsible for war crimes, the establishment of a free press, the return of refugees and displaced persons,

economic rehabilitation and the holding of local elections. It is true that the results achieved will remain fragile if further progress is not made soon. It is obvious that much more could have been achieved had the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina contributed fully to the construction of a civic and democratic society in the country. As we enter the third year of implementation of the Peace Agreement and the last phase of the consolidation period, major efforts are still needed to ensure the functioning of viable structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two entities. The European Union is concerned about the fact that the central Government in Bosnia and Herzegovina operates without any organic law, secretariat or fixed headquarters. The Assembly has met only five times since its election last year. The central budget is not funded by the entities, which withhold customs revenues or do not collect them. Large sums are being managed without the necessary transparency and outside the legal process. Bosnia and Herzegovina still has neither a flag nor a common currency.

The Peace Implementation Council met in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997 to examine progress made since the London Conference on 4 and 5 December 1996 and the Sintra Ministerial Meeting. The European Union welcomes the convening of the Bonn Conference and fully supports its conclusions. We hope that the decisive impetus given to the peace process during that Conference will be complemented by the full cooperation of all the parties concerned.

We fully support the High Representative in the difficult discharge of his duties. This action, as well as that of the international community, remains indispensable in the foreseeable future. Our ultimate aim is a Bosnia and Herzegovina with an impartial administration that is finally capable of governing itself and living within borders respected by its neighbours.

The European Union reaffirms that it will not tolerate attempts within the entities to undermine the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, nor will it tolerate attempts by any group to dominate the political institutions of that country.

The European Union would remind the neighbouring countries of their obligations under the Peace Agreement. These obligations must be fulfilled in their entirety, voluntarily and immediately.

Furthermore, we would recall that in the framework of its regional aid, the continuation of the European Union's international assistance is linked to full compliance by the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and by the neighbouring States with the Peace Agreement as well as all subsequent obligations.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): Italy associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg.

We strongly support the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn from 9 to 10 December 1997, which sets the stage for further progress in the peace process in Bosnia. Since the last Peace Implementation Conference in London, and thanks also to the tireless efforts of the High Representative and his office, it is fair to say that progress has been made.

To consolidate these achievements and make the peace process irreversible, the international community should take a careful look at the future. It is now up to the parties to show renewed determination to respect the commitments they have freely entered into, and work toward the full stabilization of the country and the region. In this respect, we note that, thanks also to the action of the High Representative, earlier this week the Bosnian parliament adopted two of the three laws agreed upon in Bonn. We also welcome the provisional entering into effect of the law on citizenship.

In our view, improvements are needed in the following areas.

First, the common institutions must function properly. The elections held in Bosnia since 1996 have favoured a trend toward a more pluralistic political scenario. Consequently, the enhancement of political, civil and media freedom, and the establishment of pluralism in opinions and political parties must become priority objectives. The ultimate goal should be political stabilization through a continuing series of democratic elections supervised by the international community.

In this context, respect for human rights and the rule of law are the basis for all societies that intend to grow towards prosperity and development. We trust that the parties will commit themselves to protecting and

promoting these basic rights and be firmly committed to ensuring respect for them in every sector of society.

Secondly, fostering good relations with and between neighbouring countries is crucial to the implementation of the Peace Agreement. But special relationships between the entities and other countries should be in full compliance with the Dayton Agreement. In this context, I would like to recall Italy's assistance to the Bosnian Presidency of the Central European Initiative in 1997, which only a few weeks ago successfully organized this year's summit in Sarajevo.

The maintenance of an international military presence in Bosnia after the Stabilization Force (SFOR) mandate expires in June 1998 is essential to ensuring security and stability in Bosnia and the region. Italy therefore welcomes the consensus that is emerging on this need. We are ready to work with our partners on identifying the best possible options. We believe that a presence led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) continues to be necessary and must have as broad a participation of countries as possible. In this regard, we warmly welcome the announcement made yesterday by President Clinton that the United States will keep its troops in Bosnia. Let me also stress that nobody, nobody can deny the extent of Europe's current commitment, both in military and economic terms. Italy, which is contributing many troops to SFOR, will certainly continue to play its part, also in the eventual multinational follow-up force.

My country is one of the major contributors of emergency assistance and reconstruction aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We believe that an effective use of reconstruction funds may prove crucial to fostering and consolidating peace. Aid must be used as a catalyst to ensure genuine reconciliation. Economic assistance should also be seen as a way to encourage democratization in the whole region. Conditionality does not mean penalizing or discriminating against one or another party: it means encouraging everyone to take a positive attitude towards the peace process. These criteria should be applied to every aspect of the peace process, such as respect for human rights — how fundamental is respect for human rights, especially there — the return of refugees, media restructuring, and the fight against corruption.

Another essential aspect of the peace process is full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. It is our strong hope that the parties will translate their commitments into effective and concrete collaboration.

The Council is in the process of renewing the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is playing a crucial role in stabilizing the country, especially the restructuring of law enforcement institutions, through the International Police Task Force (IPTF), to which Italy already contributes personnel and to which it intends to allocate additional funding. In the context of the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia, the IPTF has the essential function of reassuring the civilian population and paving the way toward national reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. We welcome the Secretary-General's intention to expand the Force's areas of operation to key public security issues, such as financial crime, smuggling and corruption, and judicial reform. The IPTF's activities are of a long-term nature. We share the Secretary-General's assessment that this progress is still fragile, and therefore the Mission's engagement in Bosnia will be needed for a long period to come. In this regard, we agree that future security arrangements should be carefully considered since they impact on the IPTF's ability to function effectively.

Italy fully supports the draft resolution before the Council, which it co-sponsored.

To conclude, allow me to assure the Council that my country will continue its commitment to contribute to international efforts aimed at restoring peace, security and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region as a whole.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Croatia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Simonović (Croatia): Since I have already elucidated Croatia's general views on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the General Assembly debate on Monday, it is my intention to limit my comments today to the role and the results of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia as they relate to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I wish to emphasize that Croatia assigns special significance to the International Criminal Tribunal and its work. Indeed, my country was instrumental in the Tribunal's establishment. When it was ultimately established in May 1993, one of its primary aims was to

contribute to peace by dispensing justice. This laudable aim is not adequately reflected in the results to date.

Croatia does not condition its cooperation with the Tribunal upon the reciprocal cooperation of any other country or entity. Croatia has always considered cooperation to be its legal, political and moral duty. We believe that all other countries should have the same attitude towards the Tribunal.

Due to its limited capabilities in comparison to the magnitude of the crimes committed, it is apparent that the Tribunal can only carry out its work in a selective manner. Therefore, discretion in deciding which crimes and perpetrators to pursue carries significant weight. Croatia cannot be wholly satisfied with the exercise of this discretion to date.

International sources have estimated that Bosnian Croats and Muslims are responsible for about 10 per cent of all the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the conflict, while Bosnian Serbs are responsible for about 90 per cent. Yet, at this moment, Bosnian Croats represent 73 per cent of those in the custody of the Tribunal. Furthermore, in spite of ample evidence, no indictments are forthcoming for the crimes committed against Bosnian Croats. The Croatian Government maintains its insistence that the Tribunal must take action in respect of these crimes.

The Tribunal's objective of dispensing justice, in which my country and Bosnia and Herzegovina have placed much hope, cannot be achieved if the present pattern is maintained.

Concerning the recent arrest of two Bosnian Croats, we wish to affirm that it is partly in order to avoid the risk associated with the use of force that the Republic of Croatia has encouraged the voluntary surrender of indictees. Moreover, while the arrests are based on international law and are within the scope of the mandate of the Stabilization Force (SFOR), they have brought to an even higher level the already existing disproportion of detainees, in terms of the involvement of their ethnic group in war crimes.

While this debate proceeds, the architects of ethnic cleansing walk freely in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Republika Srpska. General Mladic attends sporting events in Belgrade, fraternizing with other former and present senior Yugoslav army officers, some of whom are responsible for the atrocities committed in Vukovar. Radovan Karadzic gives interviews for foreign television from Pale, where he pulls the strings in Republika Srpska. Milan Martic, who ordered the shelling of Zagreb and is indicted by the Tribunal for that crime, lives in a villa in the immediate vicinity of SFOR headquarters in Banja Luka. We should ask ourselves, what kind of message does this send?

There is no doubt that the responsibility for war crimes is always individual and that all perpetrators have to be brought to justice. At the same time, due to its limited resources, the Tribunal cannot prosecute all perpetrators. Therefore, it is essential for the peace process that the Tribunal in its future work better reflect the level of involvement and degree of responsibility of the different sides in the conflict. The fact that it has not so far done so detracts from the achievement of justice and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Germany. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rudolph (Germany): At the outset I would like to state that Germany fully supports the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, Ambassador Wolzfeld, on behalf of the European Union.

The latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) shares the analysis of the Peace Implementation Conference hosted by Germany on 9 and 10 December 1997 in Bonn: namely, progress has been made, but many steps are still to be taken towards a self-sustaining peace, lasting reconciliation, tolerance and democracy.

We firmly believe that the importance of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of civil implementation of the Peace Agreement can hardly be overestimated. In close cooperation with the Stabilization Force (SFOR) troops, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the other international organizations and agencies present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations personnel, and in particular the police officers of the International Police Task Force (IPTF), face the unique challenge of serving both as monitors and partners in dialogue of the local authorities in order to establish a stable, non-discriminatory environment of law, order and tolerance.

This engagement by men and women from 40 countries deserves our respect and our full support.

A lasting, self-sustaining security and police structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the confidence of the citizens of all three constituent peoples, cannot be established by international decree; it needs the cooperation of the local authorities. The absence of war can be imposed by international troops, but reconciliation has to root in the peoples' hearts and minds.

We share the Secretary-General's observation that UNMIBH should increase its contribution to the peace-building process in an even more effective way, within the limits of the current mandate, as outlined in Annex 11 of the Dayton Agreement. While the monitoring continues, the training programme for the local police will be enhanced. Specialized education and training by international experts, particularly in fighting economic crime and corruption, will help not only to expand the capacities of the local police, but also to limit the illegal profits of those opposing the peace process.

Our increased input of international experience and police skills in order to support the police of Bosnia and Herzegovina in fighting crime and maintaining public security will remain ineffective without a democratically legitimized judicial system that guarantees fair investigations and trials as well as acceptable circumstances of detention. The international legal assistance should be welcomed by all the parties as a chance, not as interference. Last week's request of the High Representative's Supervisor in Brcko to review the privatization programme of the Republika Srpska shows the intention to work out adequate regulations in a joint effort.

Germany therefore welcomes the Secretary-General's intention also to increase the efforts of IPTF in the area of judicial reform, as well. Germany is the second largest police contributor to IPTF, having provided 166 well-trained and experienced police officers. Germany has also provided a prosecutor and other experts. We have extended invitations for training courses in Germany to Bosnian police officers. My Government is now considering ways to meet the request contained in both the final document of the Peace Implementation Conference and the Secretary-General's report, for more contributions in the form of training, funds and equipment.

UNMIBH and IPTF cannot operate in Bosnia and Herzegovina without the necessary security arrangements. At present, a secure environment for United Nations personnel can be guaranteed only by the international military force. In our opinion, the current distribution of responsibilities between IPTF and SFOR has been effective and has met the challenges. The civilian and military international engagement are mutually reinforcing. Only a successful civilian implementation under the protection of the military forces can lead to a self-sustaining peace that may finally make an international military presence unnecessary.

But while UNMIBH — like SFOR, the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union and many more — stands ready not only to continue, but to enhance its efforts, all authorities of the central Government and the two entities must know that they themselves are responsible for achieving reconciliation, stability and democracy. The support offered by the extension of the mandates of UNMIBH and IPTF must be met by their full compliance with the Peace Agreement and subsequent obligations. These commitments include, in particular, cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Germany welcomes the arrest of two more persons indicted for war crimes by members of SFOR on Thursday night. The operation in Vitez underlines once more the resolve of the international community to bring the indicted persons to trial in The Hague. If justice is not brought to Bosnia and Herzegovina, peace and reconciliation will remain a distant goal.

At the Bonn Conference, it was clearly pointed out that the patience of the international community is not unlimited. Those who ignore or boycott their obligations to cooperate, in particular in the joint Presidency, should know that time is not on their side. Therefore, the Peace Implementation Conference strengthened the position of the High Representative. Germany welcomes the first use of his new competences on 16 December, when the High Representative imposed new legislation on citizenship, effective 1 January 1998, after the Federal Assembly failed to come to an agreement.

I want to close by expressing our gratitude and deep respect for the work of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ambassador Kai Eide, and his staff, who can claim credit for the successful work of UNMIBH and IPTF thus far. Ms. Elisabeth Rehn has all our best wishes and support as she takes over Mr. Eide's task to work towards establishing a lasting and self-sustaining peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Argentina. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is a great honour to take part in this debate under your presidency, Sir. You fittingly represent a country that has played a key role in the successful achievement of peace in Central America and that has for a long time been an example of good government for the entire hemisphere.

Argentina participated in the Security Council's adoption in 1995 of the first resolutions designed to implement the General Framework Agreement for Peace, which was initialled in Dayton on 21 November of that year. In our view, any assessment of the process that began there must take into account the contrast between the prevailing scepticism of that time and today's relative optimism.

It is true that much remains to be done. A fully functioning central Government, the practice of good government, the return of refugees and displaced persons to their places of origin, the exercise of freedom of expression, cooperation with the International Tribunal and the holding of municipal elections are some of the matters that must be addressed as soon as possible. The difficulties they present should not be cause for discouragement, nor should they justify delays that jeopardize areas of agreement or long-term objectives.

We are encouraged by the description in the Secretary-General's report of the progress made in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially as regards the functioning of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, specifically, the fulfilment of the mandate of the International Police Task Force. The United Nations and all the agencies mentioned by the Secretary-General that are involved in implementing the Peace Agreement deserve our fullest confidence so that they can successfully continue their difficult task.

We fully support the initiative to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also hope that the International Police Task Force, which is part of that Mission, will have the necessary military support to carry out its functions during the period of its mandate.

We would like to express our special appreciation for the work being done by Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and by Mr. Manfred Seitner, Commissioner of the International Police Task Force. At the same time, allow me to express my gratitude to all the countries that, in various ways, are contributing to this delicate mission. Argentina is honoured to have been part of the International Police Task Force since its inception and will continue to participate as long as is necessary.

Allow me to say, as we approach the conclusion in this important debate, that what has happened in that region and its consequences can be only partially rectified by the tools available to this Council. We therefore believe that every avenue of solidarity and assistance must be pursued, in order to return as much hope as possible to those who have suffered so much.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Argentina for his kind words addressed to my country.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution (S/1997/989) to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Chile, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1144 (1997).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is an honour to participate in this meeting under your able guidance as President and in light of the leadership shown by your country in this and in many other issues.

(spoke in English)

The action of the Security Council today to approve the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF), demonstrates our continuing commitment to peace in the region. Since yesterday, we have assembled to debate in open session on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a little more than two years after the General Framework Agreement for Peace was signed. We face many challenges ahead, but our debate has highlighted the impressive level of accomplishment thus far and should give us a renewed sense of hope and resolve, however tempered by the difficulties before us now.

Most importantly, a stable military environment exists. Stockpiles of armaments are being reduced, and the Standing Committee on Military Matters is helping to bridge the gap between former adversaries. Thanks to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the multinational Stabilization Force (SFOR), the threat of war has receded, affording the parties the opportunity to make peace and to build a stable and democratic society. The presence of these international armed forces is the biggest factor contributing to implementation of the Peace Agreement at the current time.

Despite lingering memories of war and conflict, the seeds of reconciliation are growing. With the assistance of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), democratic elections have been successfully held for all levels of government, and new governmental institutions are beginning to function. National institutions have been established, and Federation joint institutions are formed and operating. Although municipal election results are being contested in some areas and implementation can be slow, multi-party democracy is beginning to take hold in Bosnia. While many of these institutions and structures may not yet function fully or independently, the fact that they exist and provide a potential forum for joint decisions and policy-making was inconceivable to many just last year.

Meanwhile, economic prospects are brightening. In the Federation, the gross domestic product is rising and unemployment is falling. International reconstruction assistance has made great strides in rebuilding infrastructure, providing electric power, utilities, housing and schools. Progress is being made on an integrated telecommunications system, and airports in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar are being opened to civil air traffic. We hope that increased cooperation on implementation of the Peace Agreement in the Republika Srpska will soon allow more international assistance to be made available in that entity as well. Assistance from the international community must remain conditional on compliance with the Peace Agreement and subsequent obligations.

Despite the encouraging signs, we cannot deny that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina — and the international effort to assist them — continue to face daunting odds. While there has been progress on common institutions, more is needed. The leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina must do more to make economic revival self-sustaining. Return of refugees and displaced persons also has not been as rapid as we would like, even though it is perhaps the key element of the reconciliation and rebuilding effort. On this issue in particular we must make a concentrated and concerted effort, on an urgent basis. While more than 400,000 refugees and displaced persons have returned home, four times as many were displaced by the war. Moreover, the remaining returnees are mainly those from areas in which they are "the minority" group and where they face even greater obstacles to their return. If we fail to support the right of refugees to return home in safety, we accept and legitimize the results of ethnic cleansing and brutality on a scale which has no place in the late twentieth century. Even worse, we create the conditions for a new cycle of displacement and conflict which will threaten lasting peace in the region.

Our focus on reconciliation also means political and material support for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and continuing the pressure for the surrender of all persons indicted by the Tribunal. While gratified by recent improvement in cooperation with the Tribunal by some parties, and strongly supporting recent SFOR actions in this regard, we reiterate that other parties' failure to cooperate can mean only continued isolation.

The full establishment of independent media throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina is also a pressing priority for reconciliation efforts.

Another essential factor in the reconciliation process and the rebuilding of civic life is the International Police Task Force, which we have just addressed. The IPTF has made valuable contributions to the retraining and restructuring of local police and in helping to achieve significant improvement in freedom of movement. Increased and enhanced international contributions to the IPTF are needed, especially in providing monitors with

specialized qualifications, and we warmly welcome the pledges that have already been made in this regard. Police reform is critical for all aspects of Dayton implementation, including refugee returns, freedom of movement and good governance. We strongly support the recommendations made at the Peace Implementation Conference in Bonn to restructure the IPTF to provide maximum support to the most pressing civilian implementation needs, particularly the creation of specialized units to train Bosnian police to address more effectively key public security issues.

The meeting of the Peace Implementation Council held in Bonn last week demonstrated that the international community remains unified and resolute in its efforts to help the parties create lasting peace in the region. The Council reinforced the authority of the High Representative in the broad range of responsibilities related to civilian implementation of the Peace Agreement. We strongly support the important initiatives taken by the Peace Implementation Council to ensure that the civilian implementation effort has adequate authority and sufficiently robust mechanisms to function assertively and decisively, especially when addressing the serious problem of corruption.

For our part, we will remain actively engaged with NATO allies and SFOR partners in considering options for the multinational follow-on force to SFOR to provide a secure environment for civilian implementation in Bosnia beyond June of 1998. It has become clear that continued progress in Bosnia necessitates a follow-on military force, led by NATO, after SFOR ends. In that light, President Clinton yesterday announced that the United States can take part in a security presence in Bosnia when the multinational Stabilization Force withdraws this summer, to enable intensified civilian and economic efforts in the region to proceed in an atmosphere of confidence.

My Government agrees with the Secretary-General's view that the future of the IPTF is closely linked to the continued presence in Bosnia of a NATO-led peacekeeping force. It therefore makes sense that further extensions of the IPTF's mandate should be considered only when the details of what will follow SFOR become clearer. That is why we have supported a six-month extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the debate on an SFOR follow-on force moves ahead, we expect that IPTF will assume as much responsibility for public security as it can. We should all be thinking about how IPTF can play a more effective role in pursuing our shared goals. My Government has made a number of suggestions to improve IPTF's performance under its current mandate. We believe these should be implemented, especially those related to reform of personnel policies. We do not claim a monopoly on good ideas, however, and we welcome suggestions from other IPTF contributors and the Secretary-General.

We have not pressed for changes in IPTF's mandate in the context of this renewal. However, a prolongation of the status quo is not acceptable. We have not foreclosed the option of changing the mandate in the future if that would help to improve IPTF's effectiveness. In the meantime, we look forward to a constructive dialogue with our United Nations partners on how to maximize IPTF's contribution to peace and stability.

I would also add that my Government believes that changes, for now, can be kept within existing financial resources. Our vote in favour of this resolution should not be interpreted as authorizing any increase in costs for the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finally, we join in expressing our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General's Special Representative and all the international personnel serving the cause of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We remember, in particular the victims of the 17 September helicopter crash. Their sacrifice and those of many, many others in the years since the war began strengthen our resolve as we continue our efforts to ensure a just and lasting peace in the region.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to my country.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.